

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

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MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2005

Miles of suspicion



In Iraq, a convoy is also combat for vigilant troops Page 4

CHARLIE COON/Stars and Stripes

A truck filled with medical supplies causes a recent Combat Logistics Patrol from Tikrit, Iraq, to come to a halt, when a stretcher started to fall out. The soldiers went into a defensive perimeter, guarding its trucks against a possible attack, until the load was secured and the convoy could continue. The dangers of moving supplies from point A to point B in Iraq are so severe, "convoy" isn't a word that does justice to the mission. "Combat Logistics Patrol" has taken over to describe the military vehicles that escort supply trucks.

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Hunter S. Thompson memorial: Friends and family of the late Hunter S. Thompson gathered Saturday night at a luxury hotel to remember the writer with a private party.

In keeping with Thompson's wishes, the memorial celebration at the Hotel Jerome in this mountain resort town was closed to reporters and the public.

Outside, a careful passerby might have noticed Johnny Depp, who portrayed Thompson in a film adaptation of "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas," and John Cusack slipping into the hotel, along with guests carrying invitations.

Inside, the hotel's ballroom was decorated with a giant American flag and an almost life-size black-and-white photo cutout of Thompson standing in front of it.

Aspen residents honored Thompson's request for privacy.

World

Kyrgyzstan election protests: Hundreds of people across Kyrgyzstan on Sunday protested alleged irregularities in last month's elections, with supporters of one opposition candidate blocking a key road linking the country with China, police said.

Supporters of another opposition candidate continued to occupy a government building in the country's south for a third day Sunday, trying to recognize his defeat in the Feb. 27 vote.

The Central Asian nation's parliamentary elections were criticized by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as falling short of international standards. Election officials said opposition candidate Isenbay Kadyrbekov's appeal with the Central Election Commission would be considered on Monday.

Jordan terror arrest: A man charged with e-mailing bomb threats to Jordanian intelligence officers said Sunday he was tortured into making false confessions while in detention.

Murad Khaleel al-Assidh, 18, a Jordanian of Palestinian descent, was arrested in December and has pleaded not guilty to Jordan's charge of threatening violence to disturb the public.

His case was assigned until March 13.

Madrid bombings: The prime minister has urged media outlets not to broadcast grisly footage and photos of the Madrid train bombings as Spain marks the attacks' first anniversary this week, saying it will make victims suffer unduly.

News coverage "at all times must respect the victims' pain," Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero said Saturday in an interview with the private Foundation for Victims of Terrorism.

The government has declared Friday's anniversary a day of national mourning, with flags to fly at half-staff.

British royal wedding: The forthcoming wedding of Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles is good for Britain and people should support it, the former Archbishop of Canterbury said Sunday.

A local registry is expected to rule soon on nine formal objections that have been filed against the marriage plans. The objections were filed by unidentified Britons on Friday, the deadline for such challenges.

James Brown in Indonesia: Legendary soul singer James Brown said Sunday that Michael Jackson was being "set up" in his child molestation trial and that the embattled performer should be touring tsunami-hit Asia rather than defending himself in a U.S. court.

Speaking in Indonesia ahead of a concert



Pope's recovery: Pope John Paul II waves to faithful Sunday as he appears for the traditional Angelus prayer at a window of his apartment on the 10th floor of Rome's Gemelli Polyclinic Hospital, in this picture released by Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano. The pope looked alert as he sat behind the closed window, repeatedly raising his arms to bless the crowd, but he did not speak during the three-minute appearance. Residents in the pope's hometown of Wadowice, Poland, held special prayers and signed a book of greetings that will be delivered to the pope. Orthodox Christians in Bucharest, Romania, also prayed for the pontiff, who visited the nation in 1999, his first trip to a Christian Orthodox country.

Sunday, the 71-year-old Godfather of Soul also claimed to be the root of modern music.

"All the music playing the last part of the 20th century was all James Brown," he said.

"The 21st century is just James Brown period. Whether it's rap, hip hop, gospel, or country doesn't make no difference. They are all using my stuff and I'm glad because I've been able to bring something to music."

Brown said he came to Indonesia in part to raise awareness about the Dec. 26 tsunami that killed more than

Brown

173,000 people in 11 countries around the Indian Ocean.

N. Korea nuke talks: North Korean leaders told China they are ready to resume six-nation nuclear talks, the Chinese foreign minister said Sunday, but he didn't say whether Pyongyang attached any conditions.

China has been trying to arrange new talks on the North's nuclear program. Pyongyang announced Feb. 10 that it had produced nuclear weapons and had no interest in returning to the disarmament talks.

Responding to a message from Chinese President Hu Jintao, the North Korean leadership said "it remained ready and willing to continue to participate in the six-party talks," Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said.

China's defense budget: A general in charge of finance for China's military says Beijing doesn't spend enough on defense even after the announcement of another double-digit annual budget increase.

"Compared with other major countries in the world, the military expenditures of our country are still at a fairly low level," the official Xinhua News Agency quoted Maj. Gen. Ding Jiyue as saying. China announced Friday its military budget will rise 12.6 percent this year to \$29.9 billion — a figure that analysts say is proba-

bly far less than its true spending. It was the fourth double-digit increase in five years.

Bobby Fischer deportation saga: American chess champion Bobby Fischer could be deported to the United States to face tax evasion charges, a Japanese news report said Sunday.

The report by the national Mainichi newspaper could signal more trouble for Fischer as he battles a separate Japanese deportation order to the United States and tries to win free passage to Iceland. Fischer, 61, has been held by Japanese immigration authorities since being arrested in July while trying to board a plane to the Philippines allegedly using an invalid U.S. passport.

Congo violence: Children as young as 8 and women are among the militia who have attacked several villages in Congo's violent Ituri province, killing dozens and forcing more than 70,000 from their homes, a United Nations spokesman said.

Militias suspected of killing nine U.N. peacekeepers in northeastern Congo have also taken thousands of people hostage to use as sex slaves and to ferry gold and other minerals, said U.N. spokesman Kemal Saliki.

U.N. peacekeepers negotiated the release of more than 1,500 hostages in early February, and assisted another 3,700 who were kidnapped and later released by ethnic Lendu militia, said Maj. Aamer Zahid, spokesman for U.N. troops in Congo, on Saturday.

Somalia peace demonstrations: Hundreds of people demonstrated peacefully Sunday in support of the U.S. government's stand against the use of peacekeepers from neighboring countries in efforts to end Somalia's 14-year conflict.

On Thursday, U.S. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher backed key Somali lawmakers, saying that the interests of Somalia's neighbors — Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya — are best served by a stable and effective central government running Somalia and not by them being part of a peacekeeping mission.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



A woman in Rome on Saturday reads *Il Manifesto*, which featured an article by journalist Giuliana Sgrena, who denied U.S. allegations that a car driving her to the Baghdad airport was speeding before U.S. soldiers shot at it, wounding Sgrena and killing an Italian intelligence officer.

Italian journalist rejects American account of attack

BY MARIA SANMINIATELLI
The Associated Press

ROME — The Italian journalist wounded by American troops in Iraq after her release by insurgents rejected the U.S. military's account of the shooting and denied Sunday to rule out the possibility she was deliberately targeted. The White House said it was a "horrific accident" and promised a full investigation.

Meanwhile, an autopsy performed on the agent who died trying to save Giuliana Sgrena reportedly showed he was struck in the temple by a single round and died instantly as the car carrying Sgrena sped to the Baghdad airport.

Friday's shooting that wounded the 56-year-old journalist and killed Italian intelligence officer Nicola Calipari as they were celebrating her freedom has fueled anti-American sentiment in a country where people are deeply opposed to U.S. policy in Iraq.

Sgrena, who works for the communist daily *Il Manifesto*, did not rule out that she was targeted, saying the United States likely disapproved of Italy's methods to secure her release, although she did not elaborate.

"The fact that the Americans don't want negotiations to free the hostages is known," Sgrena told Sky TG24 television by telephone, her voice hoarse and shaky. "The fact that they do everything to prevent the adoption of this practice to save the lives of people held hostages, everybody knows that. So I don't see why I should rule out that I could have been the target."

Italian officials have not provided details about the negotiations leading to Sgrena's release Fri-

day after a month in captivity, but Agriculture Minister Giovanni Alemanno was quoted as saying it was "very likely" a ransom was paid. U.S. officials object to ransoms, saying it encourages further kidnappings.

White House counselor Dan Bartlett said Sunday the shootings were a "horrific accident" and pointed out that President Bush had called Berlusconi to offer condolences and promise a full investigation.

The U.S. military has said the car Sgrena was riding in was speeding, and Americans used hand and arm signals, flashing white lights and warning shots to get it to stop at the roadblock.

But in an interview with Italian La 7 TV, Sgrena said, "There was no bright light, no signal." She also said the car was traveling at "regular speed."

Sgrena also recalled how Calipari, who led negotiations for her release, died after throwing himself over her when the shooting broke out as they were celebrating her freedom on the way to the airport.

"I remember only fire," she wrote in *Il Manifesto*, which fiercely opposed the war in Iraq. "At that point a rain of fire and bullets came at us, forever silencing the happy voices from a few minutes earlier."

Sgrena said the driver began shouting that they were Italian, then "Nicola Calipari dove on top of me to protect me and immediately, and I mean immediately, I felt his last breath as he died on me."

An autopsy was performed Sunday, and ANSA quoted doctors as saying Calipari was struck in the temple by a single round and died instantly.

Kurds, Shiites get top jobs as assembly set to meet March 16

BY PATRICK QUINN
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraqi politicians set March 16 for the opening of the country's first democratically elected parliament in modern history as a deal hardened Sunday to name Jalal Talabani, a leader of the minority Kurds, to the largely ceremonial presidency.

The powerful prime minister's job will go to Ibrahim al-Jaafari, a deeply conservative Shiite who is leader of the Islamic Dawa party. His nomination, which the Kurds have agreed to, has been endorsed by the most powerful Shiite cleric in Iraq — Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani.

"This was one of our firm demands and we agreed on it previously. The agreement states that Jalal Talabani takes the presidential post and one of the United Iraqi Alliance members takes the prime minister's post," Talabani spokesman Azad Jundiyan said.

He added, however, that the clergy-backed United Iraqi Alliance also reached a preliminary agreement with the Kurds on their other conditions — including extending their territories to include Kirkuk.

Jundiyan said they wanted the deal on paper before going through with it, while alliance officials, including Ahmad Chalabi, said those negotiations were not over.

Baghdad's new Shiite governor, Ali Fadhl al-Imr, took office Sunday to become the city's first democratically elected municipal official since the fall of Saddam Hussein. Provincial and municipal elections were held along national ones on Jan. 30.

In northern Mosul, 225 miles north of Baghdad, gunmen killed a prominent Sunni Arab politician, Hana Abdul Qader, a lawyer and former member of Mosul's previous city council, was shot as she left her home, said Nour Al-Din Saied, a spokesman for the Iraqi Islamic party in Mosul.

U.S. soldiers assigned to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force and Iraqi forces arrested more than 60 suspected insurgents in the city of Hawsa, 31 miles south of Baghdad, on Saturday, a U.S. military announcement said Sunday.

State-run Al-Iraqiya television also reported that Barham Saleh, a Kurd who is the deputy prime minister for national security affairs, confirmed that the 275-seat National Assembly elected more than one month ago would convene on March 16.

March 16 is the anniversary of the 1988 Saddam Hussein-ordered chemical attack on the northern Kurdish town of Halabja, which killed 5,000 people. Saleh had met with alliance leader Abdel Aziz al-Hakim on Saturday when the alliance convened to discuss the issue.

Al-Jaafari and the alliance had agreed on Talabani's presidency during a March 3 meeting with Kurdish leaders in northern Irbil.

Kurds had long wanted the job for Talabani, the leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

The alliance, with 140 seats in the assembly, needs the 75 seats held by a Kurdish coalition for the two thirds majority needed to elect a president and two vice presidents, the first step toward setting up a government under a prime minister.

Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, who controls 40 seats in the assembly, also has been negotiating to keep his job.



Residents of the Al-Wahda neighborhood, south of Baghdad, protest outside the Convention Center in the heavily fortified Green Zone in Baghdad on Sunday. The protesters say a lack of security in their neighborhood leaves them open to attacks.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Saturday, at least 1,507 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,142 died as a result of hostile action, according to the Defense Department. The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is 12 higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Friday.

The British military has reported 86 deaths; Italy, 20; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 17; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the

Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Latvia one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,369 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 1,033 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ No deaths reported.

The latest identifications reported by the military or family:

■ No identifications reported.



Scars pull to the side of the road as a recent Combat Logistics Patrol passes through downtown Tikrit. Iraqis have been told to yield when a convoy passes. The dangers of moving supplies from point A to point B in Iraq are so severe, "convoy" isn't a word that does justice to the mission. "Combat Logistics Patrol" has taken over to describe the military vehicles manned by soldiers who escort civilians in the truck and are ready to unleash a hail of bullets on anyone who tries to stop them.

PHOTOS BY CHARLIE COON
Stars and Stripes

Soldiers' eyes wide open on roads in Iraq

Combat Logistics Patrols stay vigilant while moving supplies

BY CHARLIE COON
Stars and Stripes

TIKRIT, Iraq — "You say a little prayer before going out," Spc. Hamdan Jaludi said. "After that, you just keep your eyes open."

So begins the Combat Logistics Patrol, which is when heavily armed military vehicles escort a line of trucks that are moving supplies from point A to point B. Civilians drive the trucks, while the military vehicles are manned by soldiers ready to unleash a hail of bullets at anyone who tries to stop them.

It is a tense daily routine — so potentially deadly that "convoy" isn't a word that does justice to the amped-up soldiers who guard it.

Exhausting? Not really," said the 22-year-old Jaludi.

"It's your life, you're talking about," he said.

All the roads in Iraq are strewn with places for insurgents to hide bombs or mount an ambush, which makes for high-sensory paranoia every time the soldiers leave the gate and results in high-fives and sighs of relief every time they return unscathed.

"It's almost addictive, like a drug," said 1st Lt. Brian Broas, a convoy commander with the 50th Main Support Battalion, 42nd Infantry Division. "No matter how short of a trip, you spend a day and a half preparing for it."

"During the actual convoy it's exhilarating. You constantly have to push other thoughts out of your mind. Your perception is heightened. I can see how soldiers can get addicted to it."

Tuesday's convoy was typical,

it ran from Tikrit to Kirkuk and back, about 65 miles and 2 hours, 45 minutes each way.

The route snaked through downtown Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's hometown, and moved out onto a crusty two-lane road dubbed IED Alley for its history of roadside bombs that have been placed there.

The relatively small 22-vehicle convoy was delivering water, food, mail, vehicle parts and other necessities to Forward Operating Base Warrior, and planned to return other vehicles and payload back to the 50th MSB's home base, FOB Speicher, one of the main supply hubs in north-central Iraq.

As soon as it left Speicher, soldiers in one armored Humvee noticed that no Iraqi children were out playing at their usual spot. A single shot was fired from the adjacent neighborhood of shacks. Maybe it was a sniper, maybe just someone harassing the troops, they said.

Troops carefully examined a single, leafy tree in the highway median as they approached, it's an easy spot to plant a bomb. "They gotta cut that down," Broas barked over the roar of the Humvee's engine.

The light traffic in Tikrit that morning was a troublesome sign. Up in the Humvee's turret, Jaludi waves at oncoming Iraqi motorists to pull off to the shoulder. Most do, some don't. He swings his M249 Squad Automatic Weapon around and aims it at drivers who come too close.

The Humvee driver veers toward those who are driving toward the vehicle, and the aimed

At a fast clip, unit takes over

TIKRIT, Iraq — In its first three weeks in Iraq, the 50th Main Support Battalion ran 165 convoys to U.S. bases throughout north-central Iraq.

Its soldiers, part of the 42nd Infantry Division-led Task Force Liberty, delivered 1,100 vehicles and their payloads of water, fuel, ammunition and other necessities. Then they turned around and brought more vehicles and supplies back home to Forward Operating Base Speicher.

"It was a little steep to begin with," said Lt. Col. Roch Switlik, the battalion commander, because the task force had just taken the reins from the 1st Infantry Division. "We'll now average 15 to 20 CLPs a week, 60 to 100 vehicles a day."

CLPs, pronounced "clips," stands for Combat Logistics Patrols, the new name for convoys. It's a name Switlik said better reflects the missions, when the battalion's well-armed Humvees and Hennessey repair-recovery vehicles escort tractor-trailers loaded with supplies.

"Combat teams are out there looking for insurgents," Switlik said. "The insurgents are out there looking for us. Each level of play on the battlefield has its own level of risk."

The 50th MSB took over for the 1st ID's 701st Main Support Battalion.

"They didn't lose anybody," Switlik said of the 701st. "Obviously, some of it was luck. The majority of their success was because their soldiers were well trained and disciplined."

Going to school

Each convoy starts with a trip to the "CLP Academy," a warehouse converted by the 701st MSB into a briefing room. The soldiers assemble on wooden bleachers and are given a rundown of where they're going, how many vehicles are going, and the latest intelligence reports concerning the route.

There is a movie screen where Powerpoint presentations are shown, and on the cement floor is a 20-by-50 foot topographical map showing bases, routes, mountain passes and little red markers indicating the sites of previous attacks by insurgents — roadside explosives, small-arms fire and car bombs.

gun and big Humvee bumper cause the motorists to submit, pull over and stop.

"You gotta play chicken with them," Jaludi said.

Some trash sitting by the side



Spc. Jessica Opatz, right, and other soldiers from the 50th Main Support Battalion listen to 1st Lt. Jeff Nilsen inside the Combat Logistics Patrol Academy as he details an upcoming convoy.

"The soldiers need to know how serious it is every time they go out the gate," said Staff Sgt. Jason Shelleby, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the 50th MSB's Company C.

"They're going to do it every day. It's a routine. If they don't take it seriously somebody is going to get hurt. Every time they have to go out like it's the first time."

Radio checks are made beforehand, and the soldiers test-fire their weapons into a huge bank of dirt before leaving the gate.

Talking the TOC

The battalion's tactical operations center runs around the clock. Its 10 soldiers chart the whereabouts of the convoys and relays information and orders. They brief the convoy commanders prior to and during missions.

"If something happens during a CLP, I want to know about it," said Master Sgt. Warren Williams, the center's noncommissioned officer-in-charge and a veteran of two tours in Vietnam.

"We're the lifeline of the operation," Williams said, "especially when we've got CLPs out there on the road. Communication and teamwork is important."

The crew works 12-hour shifts, some from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and the rest from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. The routine can make for long days but they find ways to stay on the ball.

"One, we have an important job," said Sgt. Robert Augustine. "And two, we have fun with each other, and that keeps us motivated."

—Charlie Coon

of the road causes Jaludi to duck down in his turret — just in case.

SEE PATROLS ON PAGE 5

3rd Task Force 2-7 member gets Silver Star

Col. John M. Murray, left, the 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division commander, presents the Silver Star to Sgt. Benny J. Alicea, 33, of Attleboro, Mass., on Saturday at Camp Taji, Iraq. Alicea saved the lives of six fellow squad members during a firefight with insurgents last November in Fallujah — despite suffering shrapnel wounds from two grenades.

VINCE LITTLE
Stars and Stripes



Sergeant saved six fellow troops in Fallujah battle

BY VINCE LITTLE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — On the eve before going home, the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Task Force handed out a third Silver Star.

Sgt. Benny J. Alicea, 33, of Attleboro, Mass., earned the medal in Fallujah when he saved the lives of six fellow squad members during a November firefight with insurgents — despite suffering shrapnel wounds from two grenades.

"Sgt. Alicea epitomizes what's great about our Army," said Lt. Col. Jim Rainey, the 2-7 Cavalry commander. "He's a young, disciplined warrior who's willing to give his life in the protection of his comrades."

The 850-member task force, which is returning to Fort Hood, Texas, garnered dozens of decorations during the past year, the majority surfacing from its participation in the Fallujah and Najaf campaigns. Between those two battles, 2-7 collected 17 Bronze Star Medals for valor and 63 Army Commendation Medals.

Sgt. Matthew Zedwick of Corvallis, Ore., received a Silver Star two weeks ago. Honored posthumously with a Silver Star, Spc. Jose A. Velez, 23, of Lubbock, Texas, was killed by a sniper as he stood over wounded comrades in Fallujah on Nov. 13.

That same day, Alicea — then a specialist serving as a rifleman and grenadier in Company A — and others went door to door, rounding up terrorist suspects, when they were ambushed at a two-story house along the primary north-south road in Fallujah.

Dropping back into the courtyard, with gunfire spraying out of the house and from across the street, he was struck in the hip and buttocks by shrapnel from two grenades that had been rolled through the front door.

Moving away from the courtyard, the squad headed for the street. After continuing to fire on the house, Alicea was left alone to emerge.

"That's when my leg gave out on me, and I just dropped," said Alicea, who huddled into a position alongside three wounded comrades in the middle of the road as multiple rounds flew all around them.

"I just kept firing my weapon, just shooting, waiting to get hit. I'd pretty much figured at any given point, it was all over. I just kept firing my weapon, but I didn't think I was going to make it through it."

When his own ammunition was exhausted, he grabbed magazines from the wounded and managed to protect the position until another Bradley fighting vehicle arrived on the scene. He helped load the most seriously injured soldiers before finally being taken away himself.

Alicea spent five days recovering, and his squad suffered four casualties and the loss of Velez. That made Saturday's award bittersweet.

"It feels good," he said, "but like I said, I miss Velez all the time. It's an honor to receive the award, but when I look at it, I see him, too. It makes me think about what happened that day."

"It's been a tough year for us. We've done things that I don't think any other unit could do. We've pushed it a lot and taken some losses. I'm just happy a lot of us are going home."

E-mail Vince Little at: littlev@stripes.osd.mil

Patrols: Mile after mile of suspicious objects, people

PATROLS, FROM PAGE 4

The convoy leaves Tikrit and enters a barren land of dirt and rocks, hills and crevices and the occasional sheep farmer.

Three men stand in a field. The suspicious Americans watch them closely, trying to determine if they are innocent bystanders or plotting insurgents.

Meanwhile, a piece of cargo comes unfettered from one of the trucks. At the next open stretch the convoy grinds to a halt and the soldiers scramble to set up a perimeter around the vehicles, guns pointing and eyes darting, while others clamp down the cargo.

The engines fire back up and the convoy rolls, and mile after mile each suspicious object and person draws a long hard stare. On the way back from FOB Warrior, a flare in the distance shoots into the sky as the convoy rolls toward it. It might be a signal by insurgents that the convoy is approaching. It might not be anything.

After the convoy, Jaludi, in his district New Jersey accent, describes a few of his thoughts while up in the turret. "I had three of them just staring me down," he said of the three men in the field. "Three farmers, their faces are covered up. And I look at them, and they're just looking at you."

"The little shack by the side of the road? You see it every time. So maybe today I'm not going to look at it. That's the day someone might be there."

E-mail Charlie Coon at: coonc@mailstripes.osd.mil



U.S. troops must be vigilant while on Iraqi roads, but many know some signs that can signal attack. Left: An Iraqi security checkpoint along main supply Route Clemson, between Tikrit and Kirkuk, slows down the convoy and provides an attractive opportunity for insurgents. Right: A man atop a donkey watches a convoy pass from about 100 yards off the road, close enough to launch a rocket-propelled grenade if he had one.



PHOTOS BY CHARLIE COON/Stars and Stripes

On the lookout on the road

To the trained eye, even something not there can be a potential threat. Around Iraq, troops must quickly decide what's dangerous and what's safe. Here are some of the common signs soldiers in the 50th Main Support Battalion look for:

No kids playing: If children are not outside playing in their normal locations, it could mean something is afoot.

Freshly dug holes: Insurgents use holes either on the pavement or alongside it to hide bombs along a convoy route. Most of Iraq's roads, however, have broken sections and often are covered in a spider web of cracks. The shoulders also have many holes and crevices.

Trees, especially leafy ones: Many of the trees in the median and along the highways have been cut down because insurgents use them to hang bombs (at about 8- to 10-foot high, the same height of the exposed gunners riding atop a Bradley, Humvee or light-armored vehicle).

Crowded places: At places such as gas stations or busy intersections or markets, insurgents know that U.S. troops are hesitant to fire into a crowd.

Checkpoints: Insurgents have been targeting places where Iraqi security forces accumulate.

Dead animals on the road: The corpse of a big dog like those used by Iraqi sheep herders is large enough under which to hide a bomb. They've also been used to cause military vehicles to veer around the animal and onto a planted IED. Insurgents have also used live donkeys to carry IEDs.

Motorcycles: Motorcycles are nimble enough to come from off the road into a convoy, from which the driver or passenger can lob a grenade then make a quick getaway.

People: Often standing suspiciously next to the road could be a suicide bomber. A man standing from 20 to 100 yards off the road could be hiding a rocket-propelled-grenade and launcher.

Pieces of fire treads, rock piles or scrap metal: Iraq's roadsides are strewn with them, and they have been used to conceal roadside bombs.

Vehicles suddenly appearing: It is understood that vehicles are supposed to pull off to the side of the road when a military-escorted convoy is coming through. If a person escapes from an adjoining field, or if one moves toward a convoy or approaches rapidly from behind, it could be a car filled with explosives.

Flares, kites and puffs of smoke ahead: Insurgents have used them to signal that a convoy is approaching.

Unusual manmade rock formations or unnatural objects: They have been placed along roadsides by insurgents who use them as markers to time rocket-propelled-grenade launches or bomb detonations.

Narrow mountain passes: These areas are perfect places for ambushes.

— Charlie Coon

Stronghold of Afghan resistance disarms

BY MATTHEW PENNINGTON

The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — In a landmark for the U.N.-backed disarmament campaign to disarm Afghanistan's warlords, the last heavy weapons have been collected from the former stronghold of the anti-Taliban resistance in the Panjshir Valley, officials said Sunday.

The countryside disarmament drive, which also aims to get 60,000 militiamen to turn in their weapons to make way for the new U.S.-trained national army, is on track for completion by June,

said Rick Grant, spokesman for the U.N.-run Afghanistan's New Beginnings Program.

The last half dozen of the 115 heavy weapons — including tanks, armored personnel carriers and rockets — found in the Panjshir since January were collected Friday by U.N. staff, deactivated and put in a secure compound in the region guarded by the Afghan National Army, Grant said.

While a few hundred more heavy weapons have still to be collected in other regions of Afghanistan, mostly in the northern prov-

ince of Kunduz and western province of Herat, Grant said the completion of the process in the Panjshir was symbolically important.

"The Panjshir was seen as the center of the resistance to the Soviet occupation and the Taliban and the most heavily armed region in the country. Now it's cleared it sends a message to the rest of the country of the progress that's being made," he said.

The valley was the mountain stronghold of famed resistance commander Ahmad Shah Massoud, whose ethnic Tajik supporters were at the core of the North-

ern Alliance which helped the United States drive out the Taliban more than three years ago. But some alliance leaders were accused of dragging their feet over disarmament.

Collection of heavy weapons in the Panjshir also was briefly suspended in January after two cranes used in the disarmament were set on fire.

Grant said that local leaders had since supported the disarmament drive and there were no further violent incidents.

More than 8,650 functioning or repairable heavy weapons have now been collected nationwide,

out of an estimated total of around 9,000 left over a quarter century of conflict. Some of the hardware will be put into use by the national army which is hoped to control the central and reach of Karzai's government.

The disarmament of militiamen has also gathered pace in recent weeks. U.N. officials say that more than 42,000 have handed over weapons and so far about three-quarters of them have joined training programs to prepare them for civilian life.

The disarmament campaign is slated to cost \$160 million, principally funded by Japan.

Militiamen learn art of demining

Guham Haidar, 25, a former militiaman, receives training as a deminer in Kabul, Afghanistan. Some 93 individuals are finishing a month of training with Halo Trust, a charitable organization specializing in the removal of mines that now has around 2,000 deminers working in Afghanistan.



Iraqi brigade takes over more hot spots

BY LIZ LSY
Chicago Tribune

BAGHDAD — In a small but potentially momentous shift, the U.S. military has handed control of some of Baghdad's most violent neighborhoods to the Iraqi army, a first step toward taking U.S. soldiers off the streets.

The transfer has taken place gradually over the weeks since the Iraqi election and is now complete, leaving about 4,000 Iraqi soldiers with full authority over 10 Baghdad neighborhoods, U.S. and Iraqi officials say.

They include notorious hot spots such as insurgent-infested Haifa Street, which has long been a no-go area for ordinary Iraqis, and the hard-line Sunni neighborhood of Adhamiya, another insurgent stronghold.

"This means we do not have to be in place in those areas," said Lt. Col. Clifford Kent, spokesman for the 3rd Infantry Division in Baghdad. "They are some tough areas, but the [Iraqi] brigade is well-trained and they're mission-capable."

U.S. advisers are embedded with the Iraqi units, and U.S. forces are on call to help out should they be needed, but the four battalions of the 40th Brigade that have been granted autonomy have full control over their operations, Iraqi and U.S. officials say.

"These operations now are being planned

and conducted 100 percent by the Iraqi forces," said Gen. Mudhir Mawla, the commander of Iraqi forces in Baghdad.

Officials had intended for Iraqi security forces to begin taking over from the Americans this year. The transfer was accelerated

after the success of January's election, when U.S. soldiers deliberately hung back and left the job of securing polling sites to the Iraqis in order to avoid any impression of interference in the political process.

It is widely acknowledged that the Iraqi security forces performed well above expectations, encouraging U.S. commanders to press ahead with the transfer of authority.

"During several missions and after the elections, a series of decisions were made that they've proven themselves," said Col. Billy Buckner, a U.S. military spokesman. "Now they're at the level of capability where they can be given a piece of terrain to manage and to conduct operations in. We expect as they gain in confidence, more transfers will occur."

It is going to be a closely watched experi-

ment.

"The plan depends on the success of the 40th Brigade in Baghdad," said Mawla, 57, an Iraqi army veteran who came out of retirement to help get the decimated army up and running again. "If we succeed in controlling

Baghdad, then there will be no need for the presence of U.S. forces. They will have bases outside Baghdad."

Another brigade, the 41st, was activated last week; it aims to start taking control of parts of Baghdad by August. If all goes well, the Iraqi army will be in full control of the city by December, Mawla said.

Maj. Gen. William Webster, who commands the 3rd Infantry Division

in Baghdad, would not put a timeline on the transfer.

"We hope so," he said of the December deadline. "The beginning is very strong; the 40th Brigade is doing very well. They have captured and killed a number of terrorists. But it's going to be dependent on events and on their readiness to fight this counterinsurgency for themselves."

Peace prize petition

BAGHDAD — A group of exiled Iraqi Christians in the United States have launched an online petition nominating Iraq's top Shiite Muslim cleric for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize, drawing more than 6,000 signatures from around the world.

Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani "gave Muslims all around the globe a good example how to follow peaceful ways to resolve complex social (and) political challenges that face them, condemning terror and emphasizing ... rule of law," the petition said.

Al-Sistani, 75, is Iraq's most-revered Shiite cleric and also a symbol of Shiite political power. He has spoken out repeatedly since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003, opposing anti-American violence and calling for an end to conflict, including a bloody summer uprising by rebel Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

Bulgaria mulls mission

SOFIA, Bulgaria — The Bulgarian government will decide by the month's end whether to keep its troops in Iraq after their current mission ends in July, Defense Minister Nikolai Svinarov said Sunday, two days after Bulgaria lost an eighth soldier in Iraq.

Svinarov stressed, however, that he saw no reasons for withdrawal and that the decision would not be influenced by the latest death or by the upcoming elections in Bulgaria.

"We're to decide whether we will stay involved in Iraq by the end of 2005 ... and how we will transform our participation as of the beginning of 2006," Svinarov told reporters.

"I think that the democratic process in Iraq is developing successfully, and it would be rather inadequate to change positions at this stage," he added.

Gitto abuse reported

MIAMI — Captives at the Guantanamo Bay prison are alleging that guards kicked and stomped on Koran-burning Muslims, and that interrogators punished them by taking away their pants, knowing that that would prevent them from praying.

Guards also mocked captives at prayer and censored Islamic religious books, the captives allege. And it would be rather inadequate to change positions at this stage, he added.

From The Associated Press

IN THE WORLD



Lebanese special forces soldiers ride on their armored personnel carriers Sunday during a security patrol in the Martyrs Square where the opposition protesters hold their daily demonstration against Syria in central Beirut, Lebanon.

Syria to begin pull out of troops in Lebanon Monday

BY ZEINA KARAM

The Associated Press

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Syrian troops will begin redeploying toward eastern Lebanon on Monday in a pullback that will take two or three days, Lebanon's defense minister said Sunday.

Abdul-Rahim Murad told The Associated Press that said the withdrawal from Mount Lebanon and northern Lebanon toward the Bekaa Valley would begin directly after a Damascus meeting of the presidents of the two countries.

Also Sunday, the leader of the Hezbollah militant group called for a massive demonstration in Beirut this week against international interference in Lebanon, to counter the weeks of anti-Syrian protests here.

The redeployment of the 14,000 Syrian troops to the Bekaa is the first phase of a two-step pullback that Syrian President Bashar Assad outlined in a speech to par-

Jordan's foreign minister meets with Israeli leaders

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Jordan's foreign minister met Israeli leaders on Sunday, the first such visit in more than four years, signifying renewed diplomatic efforts to resolve long-standing regional conflicts involving Israel, the Palestinians, Syria and Lebanon.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Hani al-Mulki called for intense peace efforts in meetings with

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Vice Premier Shimon Peres and Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, just before Shalom left for Washington.

U.S. officials said Sharon would visit the White House in mid-April, following the first trip to Washington by Mahmoud Abbas as Palestinian leader — a reflection of renewed U.S. involvement in Mideast peacemaking in the post-Yasser Arafat era.

liament on Saturday. His announcement, however, left it unclear whether Syrian forces would eventually leave Lebanon or remain inside the country near the border.

Later Saturday, Syrian Immigration Affairs Minister Butaina

Shaaban indicated Syrian troops would withdraw completely from Lebanon.

The details of the withdrawal were to be finalized in a Monday meeting of the Supreme Syrian Lebanese Council, which comprises the top leadership of both countries.

Relations between Italy, U.S. are, once again, being tested

BY VICTOR L. SIMPSON

The Associated Press

ROME — Italy and the United States have been consistently close allies since World War II, but the relationship has had to survive such tough tests as a military standoff

over Washington's bid to capture a Palestinian guerrilla leader in Sicily and the killing of 20 people when a Marine jet sliced a ski gondola's cables.

Premier Silvio Berlusconi must now manage the latest crisis, set off when American troops in Iraq killed an Italian intelligence officer involved in the release of an Italian journalist held hostage for a month.

With President Bush calling Berlusconi to assure him the shooting would be investigated, both sides appeared to be moving swiftly to contain the damage.

Defense Minister Antonio Martino was called by his American counterpart, Donald Rumsfeld, and the Italian said he felt "sure that investigations will shed full light on the circumstances that led to the tragic episode of the affair," the Defense Ministry said Sunday.

The slaying of the intelligence agent, as he was driving with journalist Giuliana Sgrena to Baghdad's airport shortly after her release, raised the political stakes for Berlusconi. Sgrena, who was held for a month, writes for the left-wing newspaper Il Manifesto, which opposes the deployment of Italian troops in Iraq.

Berlusconi has forged a close relationship with Bush, sending 3,000 troops after the fall of Saddam Hussein to help in reconstruction.

He acted despite wide opposition to the war in the streets — a rainbow peace flag hangs from a window beside his

Rome residence — in part to give Italy a greater voice in international affairs.

Italy's two continental rivals, France and Germany, opposed the war.

When news of the killing reached him Friday night, Berlusconi summoned

the American ambassador and demanded that someone be held responsible.

Sgrena said U.S. forces opened fire on her car as it approached an American checkpoint, and that Nicola Calipari, the Italian agent who won her freedom, died in her arms after he tried to shield her from the gunfire. She has disputed U.S. military accounts that the car was speeding toward the checkpoint and that the Americans used hand and arm signals, flashing white lights and fired warning shots to get the car to stop at the roadblock.

Berlusconi's political allies, however, cautioned against using Calipari's killing as an excuse to pull out the troops.

Gianni Alemanno, a Cabinet minister from the right-wing National Alliance party, told the *Corriere della Sera* newspaper that "to run out would only serve to offend the sacrifice made by a hero like him."



Berlusconi



Bush

See related story on Page 3

China warns U.S., Japan not to include Taiwan in military alliance

BY JOE McDONALD

The Associated Press

BEIJING — China's foreign minister warned Japan and the United States on Sunday not to include Taiwan within the scope of their military alliance, saying Beijing would not permit interference in what it considers an internal matter.

The Communist Beijing government claims Taiwan, split from the mainland in 1949, as part of its territory and has threatened to attack if the island declares formal independence.

"Any practice of putting Taiwan directly or indirectly into the scope of Japan-U.S. security cooperation constitutes an encroachment on China's sovereignty and

interference into China's internal affairs," Foreign Minister Li Zhaochong said at a news conference held during the annual meeting of China's legislature.

"The Chinese government and the people are firmly against such activities," he said. Li's comments came two weeks after China reacted angrily to a joint U.S.-Japanese declaration that reaffirmed the two governments' security arrangements and said they wanted to see the "peaceful resolution" of Taiwan's status.

China's legislature is preparing to enact an anti-secession law that officials say is meant to discourage Taiwan from trying to make its de facto independence permanent. Taiwanese leaders

say the measure could set the stage for an attack on the island.

Washington is Taiwan's main arms supplier and could be drawn into any conflict over the island.

Li repeated Chinese criticisms of the U.S.-Japanese alliance as a Cold War relic and said such cooperation "ought to be strictly restricted to a bilateral nature."

"It goes beyond a bilateral scope definitely it will allow uneasiness on the part of Asian countries and also bring about complicating factors to the regional security situation," he said.

Beijing regards Japan as its main rival for status as East Asia's dominant military power and responds angrily to any suggestion that Tokyo might extend the reach of its forces.

Taiwanese protest China's planned anti-secession law

The Associated Press

KAOHSIUNG, Taiwan — More than 15,000 protesters marched in Taiwan on Sunday, denouncing China's planned anti-secession law and vowing to fight what they claim is Beijing's attempt to force this self-ruled, democratic island to unify with the mainland.

"Taiwanese stand up, oppose China's hegemony," the protesters chanted as they marched, wearing red headbands,

through Taiwan's southern city of Kaohsiung.

Taiwan-China tensions have risen recently over Beijing's plan to pass the anti-secession legislation, which Taiwanese leaders say could set the stage for an attack on the island.

The two sides split amid civil war in 1949, but Beijing insists Taiwan is part of its territory and has repeatedly threatened to attack if Taipei formalizes its de facto independence or drags its feet on unification talks.



Supporters of Egyptian opposition leader Ayman Nour, a parliamentarian and head of the opposition al-Ghad or "tomorrow" party, rally at Egypt's High Court on Sunday to protest his Jan. 29 arrest.

Grassroots support builds for jailed 'hero' of Egyptian reform

By SARAH EL-DEEB
The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt — For years, Ayman Nour had handed out charity in a densely populated neighborhood of Cairo's old city — helping people find jobs, paying pensions to the elderly and opening a medical center.

Now each week, hundreds of supporters gather in the same neighborhood to call for the release of the current star of Egypt's reform movement, whose arrest angered Washington and caused Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to refer to Nour as a "hero" of democracy and cancel a recent visit here.

His Jan. 29 arrest prompted supporters to accuse Egypt's government of trying to smear and eliminate a possible challenger in upcoming presidential elections. The government charges him with forging signatures to register his party.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's recent decision to change the constitution to allow multi-candidate presidential elections has led to speculation that Nour will come to power.

In prison diaries published Saturday in the London-based al-Quds al-Arabi newspaper, Nour wrote about his "humiliating" arrest outside parliament in late January.

"There was nothing I could do in the face of this flagrant tyranny but raise my hands to the sky, asking God to see what they are doing. I cried loudly: 'Let the tyrant hear, the history record and Egypt witness ... this is the fate of the honest men in Egypt,'" he wrote.

Nour's problem, some say, is that his popularity has infringed on the ruling party's new reform agenda — led by Mubarak's son, Gamal, who is rumored to take over from his father.

"People deal with him like he is the government — he is the one that solves their problems and defends them ... God chose him to be in this place. Will you let the (people) down?" asked his elegant 37-year old wife, Gamila Ismail, his deputy in the al-Ghad or Tomorrow party.

His current hero status comes mostly because the regime has cracked down on him, said Wael Abdel Fatah, an Egyptian social critic.

"He became a danger when he worked in the same ways as the reform trend within the ruling party," and began vying for their seats in the parliamentary election later this year, Abdel Fatah said.

His current hero status comes mostly because the regime has cracked down on him, said Wael Abdel Fatah, an Egyptian social critic.

Communists expected to win in Moldovan vote

CHISINAU, Moldova — Pro-Western Communists were favored to remain in power as Moldovans voted in parliamentary elections Sunday, but the party faced a challenge from centrists who prefer closer ties with Moscow.

There are 2.3 million Moldovans eligible to vote in the parliamentary elections. Final results were expected Wednesday.

Opinion polls gave the Communist party of President Vladimir Voronin about 46 percent support. The party has led the country since 2001 through four years of economic growth, but Moldova remains Europe's poorest country.

Israel arrests 22 money laundering suspects

JERUSALEM — Israel's police have arrested 22 employees of Bank Hapoalim on suspicion they helped launder hundreds of millions of dollars, investigators said Sunday.

Police said it was one of the largest money-laundering affairs in Israel's history, involving more than 200 accounts, including some held by clients from Russia and France, at a Tel Aviv branch of the bank.

Before introducing anti-money laundering legislation in 2000, Israel was considered a haven for money launderers and was on a U.S. State Department blacklist. Israel was removed from the State Department's list of non-cooperative countries in 2002 and from its monitoring list in 2003.

From The Associated Press

Sinn Fein leader urges killers to 'be men,' confess

By SHAWN POGATCHNIK
The Associated Press

DUBLIN, Ireland — Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams said Sunday that the killers of a Belfast man have dragged his party and the outlawed IRA "into the dirt" and demanded that they "be men" and admit their crime.

Sinn Fein's annual conference, which ends Sunday, has been overshadowed by the Jan. 30 slaying of Robert McCartney, who was fatally beaten and stabbed by IRA members. Nobody has been charged, even though the attack began in a crowded pub.

McCartney's sisters, who live in a hard-line Catholic district of Belfast that is a power base of the IRA, have waged an exceptional public campaign highlighting the intimidation of witnesses and the killers' careful cleanup of forensic evidence.

Detectives say not a single witness has provided a statement identifying the attackers, making it impossible to bring charges.

Sinn Fein, which initially criticized police efforts to identify the killers and denied IRA involvement, have been forced to change tack because of the McCartney campaign. Last week Sinn Fein suspended seven members allegedly involved, following an IRA move to expel three of its members.

On Saturday, four of McCartney's sisters traveled to Dublin to sit in the front row of the Sinn Fein conference to hear Adams appeal for McCartney's killers to hand themselves in. He returned to the theme Sunday.

McCartney's killers "have brought the good name of (Irish) republicanism into the dirt," said Adams, whom the Irish government identifies as an IRA commander.

"Those who did the deed should come forward — should be men — and should come forward and redeem themselves," he said.

However, the McCartney family said it remains unsatisfied that witnesses will come forward.



Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams, wearing eyeglasses, sits Saturday with the sisters of Robert McCartney, Paula, left, Catherine, second right, and Donna before addressing the Sinn Fein party conference in Dublin.

Canadian lawmakers debate pot laws after four Mounties killed

By ROB GILLIES
The Associated Press

TORONTO — The slayings of four Mounties during a raid has added new controversy to the debate about whether Canada should decriminalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana.

Canada's ruling Liberal party debated its proposed law at a policy convention in Ottawa on Saturday, two days after the deadliest attack on Canadian police officers in 120 years.

The four Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers were killed at an Alberta farm where there was a small marijuana growing operation. The suspect apparently killed himself. The slayings

triggered a national debate over the Liberal's proposed law and whether it goes far enough to discourage growing operations while decriminalizing possession of small amounts of marijuana.

Under the bill, getting caught with 15 grams — about half an ounce — or less of marijuana would bring a citation akin to a traffic ticket, not a criminal record.

While possession of marijuana would remain illegal, the bill is intended to prevent young people from being saddled with a lifelong criminal record.

At the same time, the maximum sentence for illegal growers would be increased to 14 years in prison from the current seven, while trafficking would remain punishable by up to life in prison.

Almost 600 Liberal convention delegates at a justice workshop endorsed nonbinding resolutions that would alter the proposed bill.

They simultaneously endorsed resolutions that would see pot legalized, taxed and federally regulated — while also voting to impose mandatory minimum sentences on convicted grow operators.

But neither resolution was debated by the full convention plenary of about 2,500 delegates, meaning neither will become official party policy this weekend.

Canadian Justice Minister Irwin Cotler also said he didn't think a minimum sentence would serve as a deterrent. On Thursday, Cotler said changes to the proposed law would be considered.

Islamic terror groups active in Germany

Experts: Militants using war in Iraq to recruit insurgents

BY DAVID RISING
The Associated Press

BERLIN — Islamic terrorist groups are becoming increasingly active in Germany, coordinating with militants across Europe to recruit fighters for the insurgency in Iraq and to supply the recruits with fake passports, money and medical supplies, security officials say.

One of the best examples of the cross-continent cooperation involves an Algerian man arrested in Germany and now on trial in Italy for allegedly helping Muslims from Somalia, Egypt, Iraq and Morocco recruit some 200 militants from around Europe to fight in Iraq.

Many in Germany's Islamic communities have shown sympathy for Muslims who took part in the jihad, or holy war, in places like Chechnya or Bosnia, but authorities say since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, a grow-

ing number of sympathizers are taking an active role themselves.

"The war in Iraq has somehow mobilized this scene so that people who before just had some sort of contact or sympathies with extremist groups now think they have to do something," Manfred Murck, deputy head of the Hamburg government agency that tracks extremists, told The Associated Press.

"It's a main topic that brings people to action that they otherwise might not have taken. In past years they were talking about jihad, but not doing anything," he added.

Ansar al-Islam, an Iraq-based group with alleged links to al-Qaida and Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi who is leading attacks on U.S. and Iraqi security forces, has been under scrutiny for its efforts to channel money and fighters to Iraq from Germany and other European countries.



The multicultural center in Neu-Ulm, southern Germany, was searched by police in mid-January as raids were conducted to find individuals linked to Islamic terror groups. Such groups are becoming increasingly active in Germany, using the U.S. military presence in Iraq to rally support and recruit fighters to join the insurgency.

Though most German attention immediately following al-Qaida's Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States was on Hamburg — where three of the four suicide hi-

jackers had lived and studied — recent efforts have broadened across the country and continent.

In December, three suspected members of Ansar al-Islam were

arrested in Berlin on charges they were plotting to assassinate interim Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi during his visit to Berlin that month.

"The Islamist scene in Germany is very well connected, and not only in Germany," a senior German intelligence official told AP, speaking on condition of anonymity. "Muslim activities are more globalist — more pan-European — than Europeans are."

Murck, the Hamburg official, cited the example of Algerian Abderrazak Mahdjoub as an indication of cross-border connections at work within Ansar al-Islam. He was arrested in Hamburg in November 2003 on an Italian warrant and extradited to Milan last March.

In another major German case, 15 suspects — some connected with Ansar al-Islam — and Al-Tawhid, another terror group linked to al-Zarqawi — were picked up in nationwide raids in mid-January that centered on the twin southern cities of Ulm and Neu-Ulm. The suspects included nationals of Germany, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya and Bulgaria.

Madrid summit may favor tackling the causes of terrorism

BY ED MCCULLOUGH
The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — Governments afflicted by extremist violence must address its causes if they hope to defeat it, not just strike back as the United States has done, say experts who will take part in a world conference on terrorism in Madrid this week.

Those causes include poverty, religious intolerance and failures to integrate a swelling tide of immigrants.

"The consensus ... is a 'soft' power approach based on prevention — not like the United States has in mind, but (rather) with engagement with North African Muslim nations, economic development, assimilating and integrating immigrants into host nations," Charles Powell, a history professor at San Pablo-CEU University in Madrid, said in an interview.

The conference, which runs from Tuesday to Friday, brings together world leaders includ-

ing U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Afghan President Hamid Karzai and various heads of government or state, as well as about 180 experts from 50 countries. Annan is to deliver a major statement on terrorism on Thursday.

Discussions the first two days will focus on political, economic, religious and cultural explanations of terrorism, and appropriate police, intelligence and military responses.

Russia is sending the head of its national security council, Igor Ivanov, to the conference, while Attorney General Alberto Gonzales will represent the United States. The latter is a last-minute upgrade by U.S. officials who apparently worried the conference might harshly criticize President Bush for policies including the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

"The general tone of the conference will not be at all sympathetic to what the Bush administration has been up to," Powell said.

London's former police chief warns Britain of terror threat

BY MICHAEL McDONOUGH
The Associated Press

LONDON — The recently retired head of London's police force said in a newspaper article published Sunday that at least 100 terrorists trained by Osama bin Laden are at large in Britain.

Sir John Stevens also said the threat justified tough anti-terror proposals, including placing suspects under house arrest without charge, that the government is struggling to get through Parliament.

"As you read this, there are at least 100 Osama bin Laden-trained terrorists walking Britain's streets," Stevens wrote in the News of the World weekly. "The number is probably nearer 200 ... the cunning of al-Qaida means we can't be exact."

"But they would all commit devastating terror attacks against us if they could, even those born and brought up here," added Stevens, who retired as head of the Metropolitan Police last month.

Prime Minister Tony Blair's government wants the new Prevention of Terrorism Bill to include the power to order sweeping controls on terror sus-

pects, including house arrest, electronic tagging and bans on using the Internet and telephone.

Critics say the bill would undermine civil rights. But Stevens said it was "vital" that lawmakers approve the new legislation, which is being rushed through Parliament to replace anti-terror laws that Britain's highest court denounced on human rights grounds.

"For the safety of the vast majority, occasionally we will have to accept the infringement of the human rights of high-risk individuals," Stevens wrote.

He said opponents of the bill underestimated the terrorist threat, and he rejected comparisons between al-Qaida terrorists and the IRA, which waged a bombing campaign in Britain throughout much of the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s.

"I've heard opposing politicians say: 'We didn't need these new measures to fight the IRA when they were bombing our cities.' ...

"The difference is that an [IRA member] ever strapped a bomb to their body, walked into somewhere like Trafalgar Square and blew themselves and 100 innocent passers-by to smithereens," he wrote.

Sir John Stevens
Former head of
London Metropolitan Police

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Chinese lawmakers want to quiet lip-synching

BEIJING — Chinese government advisers meeting in Beijing this week have some weighty matters to discuss: blocking Taiwan's formal independence, alleviating dire poverty in the countryside.

And lip-synching.

Ma Bomin, an official with Shanghai's municipal radio, film and television administration, likens the practice of performers pretending to sing to selling fake goods. She wants to pass a law making it a crime for a performer to do so without first notifying audience members.

"Fake singing is no different from trading in fakes. It should be resolutely boycotted and shunned," Ma was quoted as saying in Saturday's Beijing News.

The law follows a campaign by Chinese rock star and artists' rights advocate Cui Jian to mobilize fans to boycott lip-synching artists. The practice is believed to be widespread in China, encouraged by a state-sponsored arts scene that churns out cookie-cutter performers with little real talent.

Japan's first Maglev train hits the rails

TOKYO — Japan's first commercially operating magnetic-levitation train, or Maglev, opened for business Sunday, carrying passengers along a 5.5-mile track that will serve as one of the main links to the 2005 World Fair.

The linear motor car, or Linimo, departed Banpaku Yakusa station near the central Japanese city of Nagoya at 5:30 a.m., Aichi prefectural government official Yukihiko Nakano said.

The train, which cost an estimated \$190 million, resembles other Japanese lines in appearance except that it has no wheels and travels on an electromagnetic cushion several inches above its tracks.

Bus-tram collision kills two children in Austria

VIENNA, Austria — A collision involving a shopping mall shuttle bus and a public transportation tram in Vienna killed two children and injured 17 people, police said Sunday.

A 4-year-old and a 16-year-old died in the accident Saturday evening, and a 15-year-old suffered a severe skull fracture, police said in a statement.

Other injured in the accident were treated for lesser, unspecified injuries, the Austria Press Agency reported, citing authorities. At least five of them were in the tram, which collided with the bus in the Floridsdorf district in the northern part of the city.

From The Associated Press



World Championship Tour surfers and locals surfers ride on the world's longest surfboard to set an unofficial Guinness World Record in Australia's Gold Coast on Saturday. The record attempt is part of the "TsunamiRun," a charity set up to raise funds for tsunami victims.

Dude, that's a big surfboard

More than 40 surfers ride wave into the record books

The Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia — More than 40 surfers cruised into the record books Saturday when they successfully rode a giant surfboard off an Australian beach, breaking the previous world record set by an English team of 14 people in 2003.

More than 5,000 people gathered Saturday to watch riders conquer the 40-foot-long, 10-foot-wide board, newspapers reported. The board, created by board shaper Nev Hyman, arrived by semitrailer.

More than 20 people carried it to the surf. The riders at the Queensland state tourist city

Gold Coast, where the Quiksilver and Roxy Pro surf competitions were held, included pro surfers Chris Ward of California and Australian champion Danny Wills.

Newspaper reports of how many riders took part ranged from 44 to 47. Hyman said the four-minute ride to shore was worth the monthlong effort to build the board.

"It was the best four minutes of my surfing life. It went in strong and straight," Hyman told Queensland's The Sunday Mail newspaper.

The board that set the 2003 record was 36 feet long.

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IN THE STATES

Crackdown on steroid use exhorted at Arnold Classic

BY ERICA WERNER
The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said Saturday he has urged bodybuilding officials to crack down on steroid use and suggested calling a summit of the sport's leaders to discuss the problem.

Schwarzenegger, who admits using steroids on the way to seven Mr. Olympia titles, also said he would put pressure on two bodybuilding magazines where he is executive editor to become involved in the effort.

"We have to step up the testing procedures, and find other ways, and be more aggressive with it," Schwarzenegger said at the Arnold Classic, the annual bodybuilding contest that bears his name.

He said he suggested the summit and discussed the problem earlier Saturday with editors at the magazines Flex and Muscle & Fitness, as well as officials of the International Federation of Bodybuilding.

"Let's talk, again about it and really think what else could we do," Schwarzenegger said.

Schwarzenegger also recommended changing the way bodybuilding is judged so that demonstration and display count more than muscle size.

Experts on bodybuilding and steroids say steroid use is common among elite bodybuilders. Athletes are not tested at events, and experts say the IFBB's random testing is inadequate and ineffective.

Last year, Schwarzenegger vetoed a bill that would have created a list of banned substances for interscholastic



Calif. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger speaks Saturday to a group of gymnasts during the Arnold Classic in Columbus, Ohio.

tic sports and required coaches to take a course on performance-enhancing supplements because he said it was too vague in defining supplements.

Schwarzenegger reiterated Saturday that he would sign a bill that made sense, but also suggested no new laws are needed.

"It has nothing to do with that we don't have enough laws, because we already have a very solid and sound law that says you're not allowed to take illegal drugs," the Republican governor said.

Democrats have criticized the governor for sending mixed signals about steroids. While saying he opposes drug use now, Schwarzenegger also said in a recent television interview that he does not regret using steroids in the 1970s because they were not illegal then.

Other critics have said his continued attendance at the Arnold Classic, where some of the athletes may be on steroids, sends the wrong message.

At least one bodybuilder in this year's competition has admitted using steroids; another spent time in jail for a steroid-related offense. Last year, federal agents investigating steroids served grand jury subpoenas at the Arnold Classic.

The Arnold Fitness Weekend began as a bodybuilding contest but now includes 20 different sports, with 14,000 athletes competing this weekend. It is expected to draw 100,000 visitors this year.

The centerpiece event remains the Arnold Classic bodybuilding contest, in which Schwarzenegger maintains an undisclosed financial stake. He helped found the event in 1989.

Dolphins beaching followed sub exercise

KEY WEST, Fla. — Navy and marine wildlife experts are investigating whether the beaching of dozens of dolphins in the Florida Keys followed the use of sonar by a submarine on a training exercise off the coast.

More than 20 rough-toothed dolphins have died since Wednesday's beaching by about 70 of the marine mammals, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary spokeswoman Cheva Heck said Saturday.

A day before the dolphins swam ashore, the Groton, Conn.-based USS Philadelphia had conducted exercises with Navy SEALs off Key West, about 45 miles from Marathon, where the dolphins became stranded.

Some scientists surmise that loud bursts of sonar may cause marine mammals to surface too quickly and suffer the equivalent of what divers know as the bends.

"This is absolutely high priority," said Lt. Cdr. Jensen Sommer, spokeswoman for Norfolk, Va.-based Naval Submarine Forces. "We want to be good stewards of the environment, and any time there are strandings of marine mammals, we look into the operations and locations of any ships that might have been operating in that area."

Bono candidate for World Bank president

WASHINGTON — Treasury Secretary John Snow on Sunday would not rule out the idea of Irish singer Bono, an activist on debt relief and AIDS, making the short list of potential candidates to lead the World Bank even though an American is expected to get the job.

"He's somebody I admire," Snow said. "Most people know him as a rock star. He's in a way a rock star of the development world, too. He understands the give-and-take development. He's a very pragmatic, effective and idealistic person." Said Snow who is part of a U.S. team working on finding a successor to James Wolfensohn, who is stepping down as head of the development bank on June 1. The United States is the World Bank's largest member nation. The bank traditionally has had an American president.

Support sought for Social Security changes

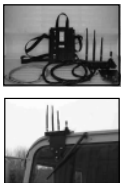
WASHINGTON — The White House appealed Sunday for bipartisan cooperation to overhaul Social Security, while Democrats vowed to fight unless the president is willing to change his plan to cut guaranteed benefits.

President Bush plans to travel across the country this week as part of his 60-day push to persuade the public to support personal retirement accounts. The president's plan would allow workers under age 55 to divert up to 4 percent of points of their Social Security taxes into private stock and bond investment accounts in exchange for lower guaranteed benefits.

White House counselor Dan Bartlett said that while polls show most Americans don't like the idea, most of the opposition is coming from people over 55 who won't be affected by it.

From The Associated Press

Model IT 4106 Disruptor



Multi-band Signal Jamming Device

The IT4106 Jammer provides four (4) channels of continuous jamming with four dedi-cated oscillators in the bands of 860-885, 925-965, 1800-1950 and 2100-2200 MHz. Each band is swept upwards and downwards in each modulation cycle and this is repeated tens of thousands of times per second. Additional jitter is impressed upon the modulation and this further confounds data transmission and error correction. The IT4106 operates from either 12 or 24 VDC power supplies. The unit is housed in a ruggedized housing and incorporated forced convection cooling.

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More youths sought for Selma marches

BY SAMIRA JAFARI
The Associated Press

SELMA, Ala. — Barbershop owner Floyd Tolbert has marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge each year for nearly four decades in the annual celebration of the bloodied pilgrimage of 1965 that was a milestone in the voting rights movement.

But as some of the original marchers have grown too old to take part and others have died, not enough young people have the passion to take their places, he said. "Older folks try to keep marching, but the younger people aren't getting into it," Tolbert said.

March veterans and organizers want Sunday's 40th anniversary events to feel relevant to young people who were born long after the "Bloody Sunday" attack by club-wielding troopers and sheriff's deputies, who drove the marchers back over the bridge into Selma.

This year's event was to feature appearances by the official tour band of "American Idol" star Ruben Studdard and rapper Lil Scrappy and R&B singer Syleena Johnson. Organizers at the National Voting Rights Museum and Institute planned a "Hip-Hop/Civil Rights Summit."

"I think we have to help them see that their future is at stake," said the Rev. Joseph Lowery, who founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and joined him on the five-day march that way to Montgomery in 1965.

But some are concerned the event has become too commercial, diluting the meaning of the protest that



Selma, Ala., barbershop owner Floyd Tolbert stands Thursday by the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma. Tolbert has marched across the bridge every March since 1966 during the "Bloody Sunday" remembrance. He planned to be there again Sunday.

inspired passage of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965. "It's turned into an event to see the next big rap artist," said Michelle Pullum, 29. "I have a 12-year-old daughter and whether she wants to go is a question of who's there."

Among those leading Sunday's anniversary march will be Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., who was clubbed to the ground on Bloody Sunday. He will be joined by other members of Congress, celebrities including Harry Belafonte, who marched in 1965, scores of activists and others.

At least some youths remained mindful of the reason for the occasion. "I'm going to all of it," said 22-year-old Tim Vickers, a student at Concordia College in Selma. "It's a big day. By them getting voting rights, they changed the whole world."

Polygamy meeting draws divided town

By TRAVIS REED
The Associated Press

ST. GEORGE, Utah — Attorneys general of Utah and Arizona told a two-state town hall meeting that they would not target polygamists solely for practicing plural marriage.

However, Utah Attorney General Mark Shurtleff and Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard told the crowd of about 350 Thursday night that they would pursue criminal charges against those involved in forced or underage marriages, sexual abuse and welfare and tax fraud.

That drew an angry reaction from polygamy opponents, who said the practice is against the law and the law should be enforced.

The meeting drew both polygamous families and those who oppose the practice. Some were in suits and ties, others in the pi-

Utah, Arizona attorneys general will not target those practicing plural marriage

oneer-like dresses and elaborate braids common in the polygamous communities.

Polygamists contend they have a First Amendment right to practice plural marriage because it's part of their religion. They also claim they've been unfairly targeted by prosecutors because they're different.

"It's never been about religion, but we certainly won't sit back and let people commit crimes," Shurtleff said.

Goddard said work still needs to be done in "breaking down decades of suspicion that have existed" between those who believe polygamy is the height of religious exaltation and those in the law enforcement communities and beyond.

"Many victims tell us that they're afraid to speak out. They're afraid of being shunned by their communities, or worse," he said.

The meeting was about 50 miles from the twin border towns of Hidalgo, Utah, and Colorado City, Ariz., which are dominated by the several-thousand member Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints — one of the largest polygamous sects.

The two officials said that since a similar meeting about 1½ years ago, their states have enhanced law enforcement, child welfare and victims' rights support in the communities — but both conceded that their work was far from done.

Some at the meeting told the officials they needed to stop prosecuting polygamy or treat it as a misdemeanor, drawing broad applause.

"Believe it or not there's a lot of happy women, and there are a lot of them here today," said one woman who took one of the two-minute turns to speak in favor of polygamy.

The two officials implored those in the audience to report abuse and cooperate with authorities to stop it — often a tall order in towns like Hidalgo and Colorado City, where members live in seclusion and distrust those on the outside.

Polygamy was once a tenet of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but was abandoned a century ago as a condition of statehood, and the church now excommunicates those who advocate it. Still, it's believed that tens of thousands across the West continue to practice it.



Airborne, an effervescent tablet for cold sufferers containing Chinese herbs, vitamins and echinacea, sits next to mainstream drugs at a Walgreens drugstore recently in Chicago.

Herbal remedies starting to fit in

By CARLA K. JOHNSON
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Standing inside a downtown Chicago chain drugstore, shopper Beth McClanahan considered the product Zicam.

"I wouldn't have known it was homeopathic," she said looking at the bright orange label. "The name Zicam sounds very scientific."

Stuffy noses and sore throats are driving many cold sufferers to herbal and homeopathic remedies. But like McClanahan, consumers may not realize they're buying alternative medicines when they choose widely popular products such as Airborne and Zicam — both shelved alongside traditional medicines in the cold and flu aisles of chain drugstores.

The makers of both medicines have paid for their own clinical studies to test their products. But Airborne and Zicam have not been reviewed for safety and effectiveness by the Food and Drug Administration, unlike prescription and new over-the-counter drugs.

The law allows their sale unless the FDA proves them harmful.

That concerns some experts. "I think it's quite confusing for consumers to try to sort out which things have some data showing they actually work," said Dr. Ronald B. Turner, a cold virus expert at the University of Virginia School of Medicine in Charlottesville.

Zicam and other homeopathic products do say on their packaging that they are homeopathic. Zicam, which contains a small amount of zinc, is the nation's third leading nasal spray. Airborne — plugged on Oprah Winfrey's show last fall — is an effervescent tablet containing Chinese herbs, vitamins and echinacea. Its label notes that the FDA has not reviewed its language saying it should be taken at the first sign of cold symptoms.

For drugstore operators, it makes sense to place the remedies where consumers can find them quickly. For the manufacturers, marketing to a wider audience means more sales.

For cold sufferers, the distinction between what's conventional and what's alternative may not be as important as what they believe works.

"There's a reason for the success of these products. Consumers want them and they're effective," said Rider McDowell, co-founder of the company that created Airborne, an herbal supplement that's a best seller at stores like Walgreens, Osco and CVS Pharmacy.

Last month, the Institute of Medicine, citing the popularity of dietary supplements, called for tougher rules to make sure they're safe and effective.

Steven Dentali of the American Herbal Products Association says his group wants new safety requirements such as mandatory reporting of adverse side effects.

"We think our safety record's going to look pretty good," he said, especially compared with a few prescription drugs.

Breast-feeding advocates try to target the bottle

By JAN JARVIS

Fort Worth (Texas) Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH, Texas — Supporters of breast-feeding have a new target in their battle against the bottle.

They're making a move against formula manufacturers' longstanding practice of providing diaper bags with samples of their product to hospitals. The bags have practically become a rite of passage for new mothers.

Bills have been introduced in both houses of the Texas Legislature that would ban health-care providers from passing out free formula to new mothers. Supporters of breast-feeding say that giving a new mother a diaper bag filled with formula sends a contradictory message.

"That's like telling someone who has a heart attack that they should eat healthy food, but in case you can't, here's some McDonald's coupons," said Marianne Baker-Bolduc, chairwoman of the Legislative Committee of the Central Texas Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition, a nonprofit organization.

The legislation was introduced by Sen. Leticia Van De Putte and Rep. Ruth McClelland.

It's meant "to stop formula companies from using health-care providers to advertise to a really vulnerable population," Baker-Bolduc said.

There likely will be some exceptions to the ban. Hospitals would be allowed to provide formula when it is medically necessary, said Jennie Gonzales Garza, legislative assistant for Van De Putte. Another exception would be to allow the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women and Infants Children to provide formula to low-income families.

Although the formula makers are expected to lobby against the bill, they haven't mobilized.

Last month the American Academy of Pediatrics updated its 1997 policy to recommend mother's milk exclusively for the first six months of life.

It is advice that many women aren't following.

Although 67 percent of women are breast-feeding when they take their baby home from the hospital, by the time the child is six months old only 29 percent of mothers are still breast-feeding, according to Denise Rice, a Dallas registered nurse lactation consultant.

To encourage breast-feeding, health care providers are now educating women at the Baby Friendly Hospital promotion, developed by the World Trade Organization and the United Nations International Children's Education Fund. To earn the designation, hospitals must ban advertising of breast milk substitutes, free samples, and gifts to health workers. They must also have a written policy on breast-feeding and train staff to assist women.

Only 44 hospitals nationwide have received the designation, none of them in Texas.

FACES

Janet Jackson seeks restraining order

Janet Jackson is seeking a restraining order against a man she says has been stalking her for nine years and tried once to bring a box cutter and knife to a New York studio where she was rehearsing for a TV appearance.

The U.S. pop singer said in a motion filed Tuesday in Superior Court that she has become increasingly frightened of Robert Gardner, 46, of New York, since he was stopped by security guards as he tried to enter the rehearsal for NBC network's "Saturday Night Live" in April.

She is also seeking to restrict Gardner from contacting her family, as well as current and former employees. A hearing on her request for a preliminary injunction was set for March 17.

Jackson said in her affidavit that Gardner had been contacting her since 1996 and has faxed her several letters.

"These faxes reference a fabricated personal history between myself and Mr. Gardner, request that I meet with him and include his detailed travel plans," she said.



Jackson

Chesney cancels tour dates due to injury

Kenny Chesney has canceled the opening weekend of his "Somewhere in the Sun" tour after tearing ligaments in his right ankle.

The country singer said Thursday he fell on a staircase and will reschedule March 9-13 concerts — in Green Bay, Wis., Fargo, N.D., and St. Paul, Minn. — for later in the month. "I know the fans in Green Bay, Fargo and St. Paul are gonna be disappointed," Chesney said in a statement posted on his Web site.

"But they're not half as disappointed as I am about not being there," Chesney said his ankle "looks like a softball." Dr. Burton Elrod said in the statement that Chesney will have to undergo extensive rehabilitation.

"He's going to play soon — with his ankle taped or with a brace under his boot, but he's like an athlete who can perform with some pain."



Chesney

Living like Martha Stewart for a day

Now HERE'S a good excuse for working at home.

Deborah Norville was scheduled to anchor Monday's program of "Inside Edition" from her home on Long Island, N.Y., to try to give viewers a taste of what Martha Stewart's home confinement is like.

Norville will be fitted with the same type of ankle brace that is being used to monitor Stewart's location now that she has been released from prison.

Over a 24-hour period, Norville will keep a record of everything she does and report on what the experience is like, the show said.

"Inside Edition," a syndicated newsmagazine, airs weeknights.

Backstreet is back, again

Backstreet's back. Again.

Backstreet Boys, the boy band who demanded "I Want It That Way," have announced a set of tour dates starting March 21 in New York.

They won't play Madison Square Garden this time around — or any of their previous gigantic arena hotspots. The Boys' 13-city tour is a club-only affair, stopping at such intimate venues as the State Theatre in Detroit and the 9:30 Club in Washington.

According to their label, Jive Records, they will perform all their hits plus a few songs from their upcoming CD.

The Backstreet Boys, who debuted in 1997, are putting the finishing touches on a forthcoming as-yet-untilled album, their first original output since 2000's "Black and Blue."

Stories and photos from wire services



Backstreet Boys

Former Bush frontman tries hard at acting

Gavin Rossdale enjoys playing dark character in 'Constantine'

BY BARRY KOLTUNOW
The Orange County (Calif.) Register

Director Francis Lawrence was on the phone, and Gavin Rossdale was convinced that it was bad news.

The former lead singer of the British rock group Bush figured that the director was calling to inform Rossdale that his small but important role as a nasty demon in the supernatural thriller "Constantine" had been cut. This already had happened to him on another movie, and Rossdale expected the worst.

As it turned out, he need not have worried.

Lawrence wasn't even calling for Rossdale. The director asked to speak to the singer's wife, pop star Gwen Stefani, whom Lawrence had just directed in a music video for her hit single "What You Waiting For?"

"It was a little embarrassing," the 37-year-old Rossdale said of the phone call. "I immediately said, 'You didn't cut me out of the movie, did you?'"

"Francis laughed and told me that he actually had added a couple of scenes. Then he asked to talk to Gwen."

The handsome Londoner said he had good reason to be paranoid. His first film experience, "Little Black Book," was a disaster.

They showed it to a couple of test audiences and the ending depressed them. That was my only scene in the movie and it ended up on the editing room floor."

Rossdale, who left Bush after six albums and will release a solo effort in July with his new band Institute, has another film scheduled for a May release. In "The Game of Our Lives," he plays a soccer player on the 1950s era English national team that lost to the Americans.

In his Los Angeles hotel suite, Rossdale discussed his first movie junket and his budding film career, including his role in "Constantine," which stars Keanu Reeves as a human who battles Satan and an army of demons to earn his way into heaven.

Q: What's a stranger experience — stage-diving into a crowd of 15,000 fans or these press interviews?

A: Well, I'm more at home diving from the stage into a crowd of kids, but what I really enjoy about this press junket is being surrounded by people who want to ask me questions about the movie. It's a relief to finally be able to discuss the film with people who have seen it. Until now, I've been walking around at home raving about the movie but nobody knows what I'm talking about.

Q: So, you're actually enjoying these days of answering endless questions?

A: I really am.

Q: Has there been a highlight?

A: I really liked sitting in a room discussing the movie with eight priests.

Q: Were they journalists?

A: I suppose they write for church publications.

Q: And what was their reaction to the movie?

A: They were very receptive. They seemed intrigued as to how much of the devil I see in myself.

Q: How serious are you about this acting career?

A: Really serious. That's why I've waited so patiently to find the right film to work on.

Q: What was it about the role of Balthazar that appealed to you?

A: I just loved the words. They were so delicious.

Q: You have a new album coming out soon. Where does acting fit in with the music career?

A: A great role model for me has always been Tom Waits. He has had a great career of making wonderful records and then popping up in a film somewhere. The hardest thing to do in a show business career is to surprise people, and he always surprises people.

Q: But Tom Waits always did these small, quirky roles in films. Isn't your goal to be the guy who stars in the movie?

A: If you're asking me if I'd like for them to hold the camera on me a while longer, I suppose the answer is yes. But sharing the screen with people like Keanu Reeves is a great learning experience for me right now, and I don't know what the future holds.

Q: So, at the unemployment office, you still write "musician" on the line that says "Occupation?"

A: Musician/struggling actor.

Q: Emotionally, what is a bigger high — acting or music?

A: Emotionally, there is something about writing music so music will always be my first love. And there is great satisfaction in making something work on screen. I hope I will be able to combine the two."

Gavin Rossdale

musician, actor

Q: How do you deal with that?

A: I try to be the first person in the pool at the start of the day, and the last person out of the pool at the end of the day. I want to learn everything I can.

Q: And how is that working for you?

A: The only indication that it might be working came from the director one day on the set. Keanu and I are supposed to hate each other in this movie because I'm his nemesis, and that chemistry is important for the scenes to work. After one particular scene, Francis came over to me and said: "I think Keanu really hates you." I'm pretty sure that was a compliment.



KRT

Men hit by train

MD ROCKVILLE — An Amtrak train struck and killed one man and seriously injured another just outside Washington at the height of the evening commuter rush.

The men were walking along the tracks behind a shopping center when they were hit. Montgomery County Fire and Rescue spokesman Pete Pinger said.

No one aboard the Chicago-bound Capital Limited train was injured, Amtrak spokeswoman Sarah Swain said.

Authorities identified the dead man as Raymond Whitley, 25, of Rockville. Keon Kelly, 23, also of Rockville, was hospitalized with life-threatening injuries.

'Frozen Dead Guy' fun

CO BOULDER — Over the last three years, the cryogenically frozen body of a Norwegian man has become the centerpiece of a quirky winter festival in a small Colorado mining town.

"Grandpa" Bredo Morstøl, who died in 1989, was frozen by his grandson and stored in a shed in Nederland, a town 35 miles northwest of Denver that began celebrating "Frozen Dead Guy Days" in 2002 to increase tourism.

Now the man's daughter, 75-year-old Aud Morstøl, is hoping Norway's King Harald V and Queen Sonja will help her secure a visa to attend the festival. The royal couple also have been invited by Nederland's Chamber of Commerce to visit and "partake in the fun and parody of the weekend."

Theft plans gummed up

IN KNOXVILLE — Three people pleaded guilty to fishing money out of donation boxes in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park by using a wire clothes hanger with sticky chewing gum on one end.

Brian Keith Seal, 34; Liza Nicole Vanderpool-Chavez, 33, and Jerry L. Carter, 44, could get up to a year in federal prison at sentencing June 10 for misdemeanor theft.

Authorities said the three stole less than \$1,000 from the donation boxes, which were set up by a non-profit group for maintenance and education projects at the park, which straddles the North Carolina-Tennessee line.

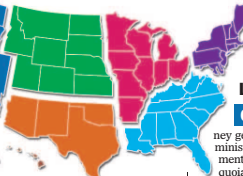
A park visitor reported seeing people acting suspiciously in a car stopped near a donation box last July. A ranger stopped the car and found dozens of sticky \$1 and \$5 bills and a straightened-out wire hanger with goo on the end.

Judge caught with knife

PA HARRISBURG — A state Supreme Court justice said he paid a \$750 federal fine for trying to sneak a pocketknife on board an airplane last month.

"Really, my only comment is ... I did a really dumb thing, which I obviously regret," Justice Thomas G. Sayler Jr. said.

Sayler and his wife were going through a checkpoint for a flight from Harrisburg International Airport when screeners found a Swiss



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Army-type knife attached to his key chain, police said.

The knife was later found in a shoe inside his carry-on luggage when Sayler went back through the screening area a second time, police said.

Sayler said the knife was a gift from a friend that he did not want to give up.

Illegal immigrant rights

AZ PHOENIX — Four months after residents voted to deny some government benefits to illegal immigrants, advocates for limiting immigration are pressing lawmakers to enact even more restrictions on those who sneak into the country.

Opponents question whether the proposed changes — this time to education — would do much to stem the flood of illegal immigration into Arizona, the busiest illegal entry point on the nation's southern border.

But both sides of the debate say the federal government hasn't done enough to fulfill its responsibility to enforce laws already on the books; in response, Arizona lawmakers have proposed several bills this year to address the issue.

The voter initiative approved in November denies some government services to immigrants and

requires proof of citizenship when residents register to vote and apply for public benefits.

Large tree lawsuit

CA SACRAMENTO — California's attorney general sued the Bush administration over its management plan for the Giant Sequoia National Monument, home to two-thirds of the world's largest trees.

The federal plan adopted in December would illegally allow commercial logging in the 327,769-acre central California preserve, the suit alleges.

The plan also violates former President Clinton's April 2000 proclamation creating the reserve south of Sequoia National Park, which bans logging unless it is "clearly needed" for public or environmental protection, the suit says.

The U.S. Forest Service adhered closely to Clinton's proclamation, responded spokesman Matt Mathes. The timber cuts are needed for fire protection, he said, to safeguard sequoia groves that have been threatened before by wildfires.

Expanded moose hunt

VT MONTPELIER — The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife hopes to issue more than 1,000 moose hunting permits for this fall's hunt and expand the season in a part of the Northeast Kingdom.

While additional moose permits will be issued statewide, the goal of the increase is to reduce the number of moose in parts of the Northeast Kingdom from about 2,400 to 1,400, said state moose biologist Cedric Alexander.

The 1,400 number is in line with the department's 1996 10-year moose management plan and reflects the wishes of Northeast Kingdom residents. And the animals are causing environmental damage, Alexander said.

Alexander estimated the size of the state's moose herd at about 4,700 animals, slightly lower than a year ago.

Rare book thefts

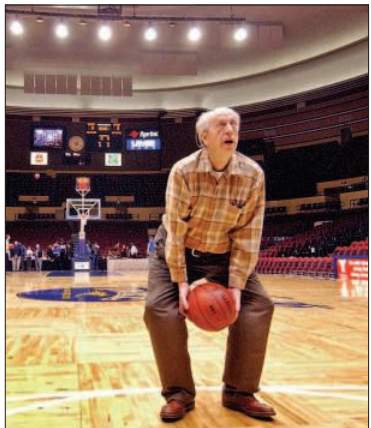
KY LEXINGTON — Four men were indicted on robbery and art theft charges for allegedly taking rare works from a university library, including a first edition of Charles Darwin's 1859 volume on natural selection.

The men allegedly tried to sell the items to Christie's auction house in New York.

The men are accused of taking several items from the Transylvania University library, including Darwin's "The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection," in which he first discussed his theory of evolution.

Also taken were a two-volume natural history published in the 1500s, pencil sketches by John James Audubon done in the 1850s and an illuminated manuscript written in 1425.

One of the men indicted is a Transylvania student; the others are current or former students at the University of Kentucky.



Give it all you got

John Fulton, of Kansas City, Mo., lines up a "granny shot" from just inside the 3-point line on the basketball court at Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City, Mo.



Puttin' on the moves

A fast cut helps Josh Maddock, 17, evade the grasp of Suos and Josh's brother, Eli Maddock, 16, as they played in a pick-up football game in Kansas City, Mo.



Group tubing

People of all ages sled down Sunset Hill in North Conway, N.H., during one of the events of the second annual Mount Washington Valley Winter Carnival.



Little wrestlers

Chase Clymer, left, and Chance Mitchell shake hands prior to their match in a youth wrestling program for grades K-6 in Washington, Ind. Officiating is program director Matt Collins.



Colorful scene

The morning sun backlights a jonquil at St. Scholastica's Benedict Park in Fort Smith, Ark.



Friendly feline

Clyde, a stray cat, seems to ignore a flock of turkeys that cross Sandy DuBois' driveway outside Maple City, Mich. The birds went their way, as did the cat.

Moose shot after attack

AK ANCHORAGE — A moose regularly petted and hand-fed lettuce and potatoes was shot after it stomped on a 6-year-old boy in a neighborhood.

A police officer shot the young, male moose after the boy was safely in a neighbor's home at the Rangeview Mobile Home Park. A densely packed swath of about 75 trailer homes with few trees or woods or even yards.

The boy suffered a split lip and headache, police said.

"As usual, it's people that have caused the problem and the moose that suffered the ultimate consequence," said wildlife biologist Rick Sinnott, with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Jail break-in alleged

AL UNION SPRINGS — Dreaming of ways to break out of jail is pretty normal. But for the second time in less than a month, police have arrested a man for trying to break into the Bullock County Jail.

Police said Ellis Hudson, 40, of Union Springs was arrested and charged with third-degree criminal trespassing after he was caught inside the fence of the jail last month.

Union Springs Police Chief Jake Wheeler said he suspects Hudson was trying to smuggle tobacco to an inmate, since Hudson had pipe tobacco, three packs of cigarettes and rolling papers in his possession.

"There's no smoking in the jail," Wheeler said. "Someone's curious about getting \$2 for a cigarette in there."

Devilish sticker protest

NM SANTA FE — The ACLU is going to court over a case of sticker shock.

The American Civil Liberties Union of New Mexico is coming to the defense of Dean Young, who was busted for having cartoon stickers of topless female devils on his car.

Young put the stickers on his car as a political statement protesting the ban on Sunday liquor sales in Clovis. The ACLU contends Young's constitutional rights are being violated and that police and prosecutors are overstepping their bounds.

A Clovis magistrate dismissed the case against Young last month on a technicality.

Police called the stickers pornographic and said they went beyond Young's First Amendment rights. Young has described the stickers as "raunchy" but not pornographic.

Virginia tornadoes

VA RICHMOND — Last year set a record for tornadoes in Virginia, according to weather and emergency officials.

Weather-service records show that 86 tornadoes touched down in 52 localities during 2004 — four to six times the normal number that hit the state in a year.

They were the spawn of a matching record-high number of tropical cyclones pummeling Virginia last hurricane season. Three-quarters

of the state's 2004 tornadoes were associated with the remnants of hurricanes Gaston, Ivan and Jeanne, said National Weather Service meteorologist Bill Sammler in Wakefield.

The 2004 storms injured 14 people and caused more than \$70 million in damage in Virginia, the state Department of Emergency Management said.

Boy's dog electrocuted

MA BOSTON — The utility company NSTAR removed a light pole from the spot where a dog being walked by a 13-year-old boy was electrocuted, but the company failed to shut off power to the site, a city investigation found.

"A violation will be written against NSTAR," city spokeswoman Lisa Timberlake said, noting that the city's Inspection Services Department issued its finding. "If there's no pole there, it's NSTAR's responsibility to shut off the power."

NSTAR officials said they were investigating why the pole was not shut off when the light pole in the city's Allston section was removed years ago.

The dog, a 1-year-old boxer named Cassius, was given to 13-year-old Kyle Devito and his 10-year-old brother, Alec, as a Christmas present from their parents.

Cable cars cashing in

CA SAN FRANCISCO — Cable car fares, which have already climbed halfway to the stars, are about to complete the trip — and the passengers who are soon to be shaken down for \$3 a ride are squealing louder than the track brake on the Hyde Street hill.

"That's outrageous," said William Laurens, a visitor from Oregon.

"There's a principle involved. Just because we're tourists doesn't mean we can pay anything."

The Municipal Railway, which hopes to raise the basic bus and streetcar fare Sept. 1 by a quarter, to \$1.50, also wants to raise the cable car fare by \$2 — to \$5 a trip. That would make the cost of a cable car ride the most expensive local transit fare in the United States.

Cat hangs on tight

ID INKOM — Torri Hutchinson's cat might just have one less life to live.

Hutchinson was driving along Interstate 15 recently when a motorist kept trying to get her attention and pointing to the roof of her car.

She said she was wary of the man, but wondered if perhaps her ski rack might have come loose.

She pulled over to the side, but kept her doors locked and the motor running.

The man pulled up behind her. Hutchinson rolled down her window to hear the man frantically shouting, "Your cat! Your cat!"

He reached for the roof of her car and handed the shocked Hutchinson her orange tabby.

She had driven about 10 miles with the cat on top of the car, and didn't even notice the feline when she stopped for gas.

Stories and photos from wire services

OPINION

When you've got good PR, who needs shame?

text BY MARGARET CARLSON

When I crossed one threshold of shame back when stars fighting addiction became "Entertainment Tonight" staples. Gone was AA with its anonymity. In was Betty Ford. Far from being an impediment, detox turned out to be a good career move.

Now we've crossed another threshold with Martha Stewart emerging from doing time at Alderson Federal Prison Camp more marketable than when she went in. The Old Martha was on cable (except for those occasional short segments paired with a Cuisinart on the third-rated "CBS Morning News"). The New Martha, who will be under house arrest for five months at her 153-acre Bedford, N.Y., estate, has escaped the ghetto of the high-numbered channels to breathe the clear air of the networks with two new shows, one of which is the only sanctioned spinoff of Donald Trump's show, "The Apprentice." She's so hot, ankle bracelets could become stylish.

I'm all for ex-cons going on to lead fulfilling lives once they've paid their debt, but I do think they ought to start with a small show of remorse. Martha is having her share of success without admitting what she did was wrong or apologizing to the poor schlubs who bought the stock she unloaded just before it tanked. At least drug recidivist Robert Downey Jr. pleaded for forgiveness before his comeback.

I had moments of sympathy for Martha, especially when I felt the prosecutor had gone too far. Men engage in insider trading every day at lunch. Was Martha singled out for trading while female? Then, when the prosecutor couldn't get her for the un-

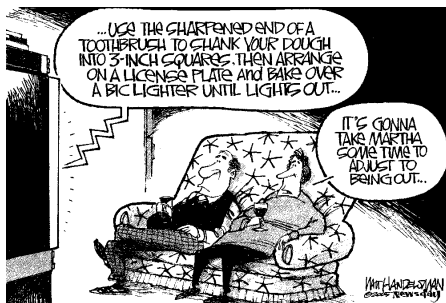
derlying crime, he sent her to jail for making false statements. Some of her sentence had to be for just being so uppity and so devoted to table settings and glue guns. So I was proud of her for taking her bumps like a man when so few men in her situation do. (Enron's Ken Lay, who plundered his company, leaving hundreds of clerks and secretaries penniless, is still hiding behind lawyers in a Houston mansion.)

But still, did she need to be so defiant about it? She went into prison early (deciding not to wait until her appeals were concluded), but only so she could be out in time for planting season. Only rappers get to be that remorseless. Snoop Dogg can be charged with murder, get cleared and then watch his next CD go platinum. But white-collar felons usually beg for forgiveness and do good works.

Snoop, serving 22 months, for instance, Michael Milken devoted himself to his ongoing philanthropic efforts and raising money for cancer research. Wealthy real-estate developer and Sotheby Chairman A. Alfred Taubman, who was rattled out by his assistant, returned to polite society after serving nearly a year for price fixing to give away even more money than before. He's also restoring the riverfront in depressed inner-city Detroit.

Martha shares something with them: They all came out looking better physically than when they went in. Taubman was noticeably svelter after a diet absent foie gras. Martha lost weight and the helmeted Milken learned there was life without a toupee.

What she doesn't have in common with old-time white-collar felons is shame. And that's the reason "The Apprentice: Martha Stewart" ultimately won't work for her. It's



one thing if she were just returning to a show where she painted her henhouse Aubergine and awoke at dawn to gather dewy grass for a spring centerpiece. It's quite another to hold herself up as the role model for budding entrepreneurs. Really, there's got to be some morality in a morality play.

The program Martha's been training for on the inside should really be called "Crime Spinners." Her five months inside were all about spin — marketing her corporate turnaround and buffing her image. I lapped it all up: "Nice Spice Rack," screamed the New York Post after Martha reportedly listed seasonings out of the prison commissary and stuffed them in her bra. She taught yoga, helped inmates write letters and adapted haute cuisine to the microwave.

"Crime Spinners" would continue the effective work of her PR team. Each week would showcase a diverse and ever-changing group of panelists who would be taught how to succeed as an ex-con without being sorry. She could round up Bernie Ebbers, Kenny Boy Lay, Dennis Kozlowski, Jack

Grubman, Tom DeLay. (I'm assuming a little here, but some of these will appear second season.) She could teach the fine art of calligraphy when writing or endorsing checks of dubious provenance, how to use corporate aircraft for private vacations, securing loans that never have to be repaid and serving chamomile tea in fine china cups while doing it.

Trump could make a guest appearance to show how companies can go bankrupt but you keep the jet, the mansions and the beach property.

She won't be able to call on fellow remorseless recent ex-con Lizzy Grubman, the PR person who mowed down 16 people with her Mercedes outside a club in the Hamptons. The minute she got out of prison, she began rehearsals for her own show on MTV. Crime catapulted her from pimping for starlets to being one.

Shame is so last season. Let me this one time emulate the Donald: Martha, you're fired.

Carlson is a contributing editor of Time magazine and a panelist on CNN's "The Capital Gang." This column first appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

Reaching out to American women, through their stomachs

Chicago Tribune

It's not the Statue of Liberty, the liberation of Paris or Brigitte Bardot, but the book "French Women Don't Get Fat" may be just the thing to thaw Franco-American relations. The author, Mireille Guiliano, was born and raised in France but professes to love America.

Loves it so much, she's willing to impart a little diet and lifestyle advice our way.

There aren't many diet books that extol the virtues of bread and chocolate but 24 pages and include recipes for such delights as croissants (made with 12 tablespoons of sweet butter), baguettes and chocolate rice pudding (don't forget the 3 ounces of dark chocolate).

But this is more of a trans-Atlantic living and eating primer by a woman who but didn't go so much when she was an exchange student in the United States that her father said she resembled a sack of potatoes when she got home.

Married to an American, she lives in New York and is president and CEO of Cicuto Inc.

Is there a different mindset that makes Americans more prone to gain weight than their French counterparts? Guiliano seems to think so. "The wisdom of the French

way of eating and living, and in particular the uncanny power of French women to stay svelte, remains little understood, much less exploited," she wrote.

Part of that ability to stay svelte may lie in the French paradox — the French eat such rich foods yet have such a low rate of coronary disease. Moderate consumption of wine with meals might provide one answer for this medical riddle. But Guiliano

insists that differences between the French and the Americans go far beyond that.

Her message: Drink plenty of water, eat more fruits and vegetables, go for quality not quantity, make dining an occasion. No low-carb miracle fads, just a simple approach more easily understood than the latest diet pyramid.

"French women eat for pleasure," Guiliano wrote. "French women don't diet."

Some American critics have snidely counted that many French women also smoke, enabling them to control their weight at a cost to their health. Whatever the truth to the dietary mystery, Guiliano's book is a runaway hit here.

Divided by so much lately, the French and the Americans can finally agree on something: Good food, in moderate quantity, yields a good life.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY





Horoscope

Saturn, the taskmaster, opposes Mars, the warrior — the theme is right versus might. When events are meant to be, they can happen in a number of different ways. Using force to get what you want, therefore, is optional. Perhaps it's better to conserve your energy. Moral of the story: When it's truly yours, no one can stop you from having it.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (March 7)

Your special achievements are rewarded. An independent spirit rules, and the next 10 weeks show you being particularly resistant to doing anything inauthentic to you. Singles have multiple romantic options through the spring. Summer brings friends together for travel and rollicking good times. Lucky love signs are Taurus and Gemini.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Strangely, some lessons in love can only be learned by developing your self outside of a relationship. Consider that you may have to create distance between you and a loved one in order to be more closely connected.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

You let down your guard and find there was little reason for you to have a tip to begin with. It's nice when humans reinforce that humanity is mostly good. Someone you need to have in your life reaches for you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

There is so much truly inspiring information out there that you don't even have to make an effort to find it. You bump into it when you're not even sure where you're going. You are being guided by signs.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

The thing that separates you from the pack is your habits. Do something that other people don't like to do. You probably won't like it, either, but your commitment to excellence rules out over the temporary discomfort.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Self-appreciation day. Don't

have to tell anybody, but the private love affair you've got going with you is getting really steamy. In fact, you're totally irresistible. Buy yourself something you've been wanting.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Career aims take over your thought process. There's a vision inside you that is growing in color. Fill it out with color, character and detail. If you see it, feel it and believe it, doing it is actually the easy part.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Caution: Don't spend your time and energy defending your methods and knowledge. You're better off following your instable drive to learn more, even if this seems costly right now.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). A slight lethargy sets in — perhaps stemming from your basically rebellious nature. The tasks ahead of you are not hard, and they are not easy. But they only get accomplished with the right attitude.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The financial luck of someone in your circle may be a source of envy. Take this as an indication that you need to get moving on your special project. The most acceptable way to get money is still to earn it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The open-minded, possibility thinker in you surfaces. Perhaps your belief about how to run a relationship was mistaken. When you are willing to be wrong, you lessen the likelihood that you will be in the future.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Your lineage affects what happens to you now. It's interesting to note what was given to you by your parents and what is self-created. When it comes to relating your deep affection, show it rather than telling it.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

People are grouped together according to the many things they have in common. Think of what you have in common with your group and whether that site well with you. What was lost is now found... in the strangest place.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



Calvin and Hobbes



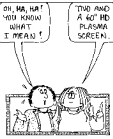
Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



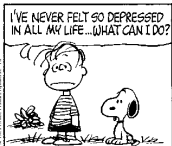
Red Rover



Better or Worse



Peanuts



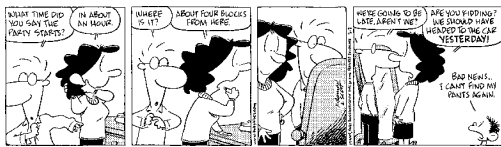
Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



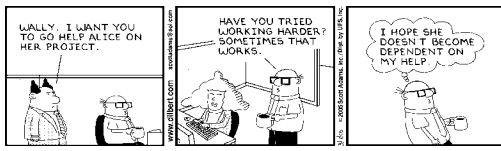
Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



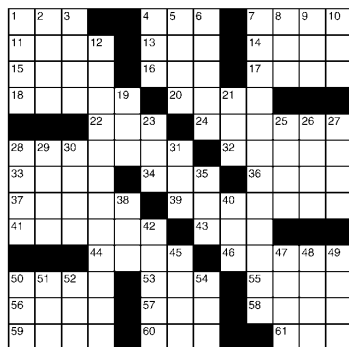
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 React to an onion
- 4 Existed
- 7 Succor
- 11 Cad
- 13 McKinley's first lady
- 14 Eastern potentate
- 15 Oppositionist
- 16 Guy's companion
- 17 Jam ingredient?
- 18 Evaluate
- 20 Former talk-show bigwig
- 22 Garden tool
- 24 Willful harm
- 28 Sanctifying ceremony
- 32 SeaWorld attraction
- 33 Actor La Salle
- 34 Boxer
- 36 "What time —?"
- 37 Cancel
- 39 Starbucks' home
- 41 Tile art
- 43 Cambridge school
- 44 Approach
- 46 Thick
- 50 "Simpsons" creator Groening
- 53 Fish eggs
- 55 Cracker name
- 56 Birthright barterer
- 57 Pledge
- 58 "Lion King" villain
- 59 On the right track
- 60 — out a living
- 61 Memorable period

Down

- 1 Tobacco plug
- 2 Actor
- 3 Auberjonois
- 3 Bigfoot's cousin
- 4 Peruke
- 5 Leading man?
- 6 "The Crucible" setting
- 7 VIPs
- 8 Flightless bird
- 9 Illuminated
- 10 Expert
- 12 Photon
- 19 — polloi
- 21 — Tafari
- 23 Kreskin's claim
- 25 Possess, biblically
- 26 Old-time actor
- 27 Trumpeter's muffer
- 28 Construction piece
- 29 Florence's river
- 30 Kegel's targets
- 31 Greek consonants
- 35 Prized possession
- 38 Phony story
- 40 See 7-Across
- 42 Tend a turkey
- 45 Castle
- 47 Pleasant
- 48 Luminary
- 49 Pound of poetry
- 50 Kitten's comment
- 51 Simile center
- 5 Pitch
- 54 Ram's mate

Answer to Previous Puzzle



3-7

CRYPTOQUIP

KTHHFKVMY UM VMKAJQ
XUK KVMYVMY XVQE
JGFKAC GVHK. PVYEQ VQ

IA JUGGAC U ETPITY?
Saturday's Cryptoquip: IF EVERYBODY WERE TO GAIN A BUNCH OF WEIGHT, WOULD THAT BRING US ALL CLOSER TOGETHER?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals L

Dog duties are woman's own fault

Dear Abby: I need advice with a problem I have regarding our basset hound, "Sherlock." I bought Sherlock for my husband, "Ken," a year and a half ago. Ken loves the dog, and so does my 18-year-old daughter, "Gretta," who lives with us.

When I heard Sherlock, the understanding was that he would be cared for by my husband and daughter. This is not what happened. I do 90 percent of the feeding and cleaning up after him. We also have a cocker spaniel, "Lulu," we have had since Gretta was 3. Lulu has also been my responsibility for the most part. Ken and Gretta play with the dogs, and I "get" to do almost everything else.

Abby, I am not a dog lover; I am a dog "liker." I feel used and resentful. Am I being unreasonable?

—Used and Resentful in Southern California

Dear Used and Resentful: Stop

feeling used and resentful and look in the mirror. Why did you buy a second dog after seeing that your husband and daughter didn't care for the one you already had? You put yourself in this pickle.

Please reconsider shrugging off the responsibility for Sherlock. There are alternatives to getting rid of him. A neighborhood teen could be hired to walk him. A pet service could provide transportation to the vet or the groomer.

Focus on the bright side. Since you and your husband have full-time jobs, and your daughter is busy with her own schedule, it's just as well that you have two dogs because they have each other for companionship.

Dear Abby: Thirty years ago my mother-in-law, "Grace," suddenly changed. She began accusing her husband of cheating on her and trying to poison

her. She made his life miserable until he passed away. After the funeral, we moved Grace into a house next door to ours.

Things were OK for a while, then she started up again.

According to Grace, everyone has been trying to kill her. A few months ago, Grace had surgery. I stayed with her until she was back on her feet. Now she says I am trying to poison her, and have people come in and steal her stuff.

My husband, her only child, is very upset and has forbidden me to go over there anymore.

What can we do?

Dear Terri: Your mother-in-law needs a psychiatric evaluation. Her son should make sure her doctor understands what's been going on before she goes for the exam. The symptoms you describe indicate she may be mentally ill.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uxpress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

THYAS

LEBIE

GRONTS

EURUFT

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www.jumble.com

A: A _____ OF _____

Saturday's Jumbles: SCARY BRINY PAUPER THRASH

Answer: When the robbery was caught on the steps, the cops said it was — A STAIR "CASE"

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion



WHAT THE KING EXPERIENCED WHEN HE WAS AWAKENED BY THE PROTESTERS.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Girl needs help after admitting rape

Dear Annie: Recently, my 13-year-old daughter, "Ellie," told me she was raped two years ago by a boy who also was 13 at the time. I had no idea, since she never let on that anything had happened, never showed changes in her personality or became withdrawn, nor did she display any signs that she was troubled.

I know that this must have been a horrible experience for Ellie, and as a teenager, it is imperative that she have a healthy support system. She said the reason she didn't tell me earlier was because she didn't want me to think she was a "whore." I reassured her and told her I would never think that, and that this was not her fault.

But her words broke my heart. Ellie doesn't want anyone else to know about the rape, and told me if she feels the need to discuss it, she will come to me. She is an emotionally well-adjusted child, but I think she should receive counseling. I also am concerned

because Ellie says she is never going to have sex again. I understand that for now, but will this carry into her adult life and affect her? She was a virgin before this happened.

I want to help my daughter. Do you believe she really is OK? Is there any legal recourse? The crime is two years old, and the boy is still a minor.

Thanks for your help.

Love My Daughter More Than Anything

Dear Mom: The fact that Ellie came to you with this information, even after two years, means it still troubles her deeply. Your instincts are solid. Ellie should get professional help. We recommend contacting RAINN, the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (rainn.org), at 1-800-656-HOPE (1-800-656-4673), for counseling and information about legal recourse. You can check it out first, Mom, and then encourage Ellie to do the same.

Dear Annie: What is the proper etiquette about inviting your boss to baby and wedding showers? My boss, who is not a particularly friendly person and has no personal relationships with any of her staff, always gets peeved when one of us has such an event and doesn't invite her. She says it is "proper etiquette" to invite your boss to these kinds of parties and that we girls have "no manners."

Am I rude for not including my boss in my personal events?

—Anxious Employee

Dear Anxious: Your boss is mistaken. You are not obligated to invite her to any non-work-related event outside the office. However, if you feel your job may be in jeopardy, you might want to make allowances for her. It sounds as if the woman desperately wants to be included in these social affairs.

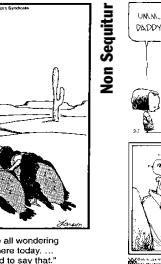
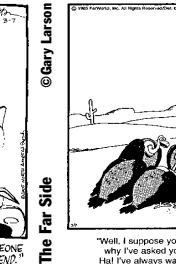
Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



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"Tomorrow's my birthday, so these pajamas don't fit me in the morning."



Giambi gets warm reception on the road

The Associated Press

Jason Giambi took his image rehabilitation tour on the road for the first time this spring and was given a warm reception. Carlos Beltran needed just one at-bat to hear how his new fans felt about him.

Giambi got his first hit of the year in the New York Yankees' 9-8 loss to the Detroit Tigers in Lakeland, Fla., on Saturday.

"I didn't know what to expect," Giambi said after going 1-for-4. "You never know, and that way you never set yourself up to be let down."

Giambi repeated several times that he was "humbled" by the reception he's been given following a winter of accusations about steroid use.

Giambi, however, wasn't involved in the play that will find its way into the most highlight shows.

Detroit's Dmitri Young violently collided with Yankees catcher John Flaherty on a play at the plate, and Young needed five stitches on his ear. Young said the blood was worth it because the aggressive play was meant to convey how the Detroit Tigers intend to play this season.

"We're the Tigers — not the kitties," Young said.

At Port St. Lucie, Fla., Beltran hit a two-run homer in the first inning to give his first home game with the Mets. Beltran also singled in three at-bats and helped New York beat the Los Angeles Dodgers 6-4.

"When you go out, you don't want to let the fans down," said Beltran, who signed a one-year, \$119 million contract in January.

"You want to make them proud of your team. That's what we did today."

Free-agent signee J.D. Drew had his first hit for Los Angeles, a two-run homer off Mets starter Steve Trachsel in the third inning.

Sammy Sosa, who hit his first homer with the Baltimore Orioles on Friday, did something even more memorable Saturday: He was ejected while playing the outfield during the second inning of the Orioles' 9-6 loss to the Nation-

Spring training

als at Fort Lauderdale, Fla. — the first time in 34 years that Baltimore and Washington met on a baseball diamond.

The sequence of events that led to Sosa's ejection by second base umpire C.B. Buckner began in the bottom of the first inning when he was called out by home plate umpire Joe West on a high third strike. Sosa briefly expressed his displeasure with the call before taking his place in right field.

After Baltimore starter Daniel Cabrera opened the second inning by going to a 2-0 count on leadoff hitter Brad Wilkerson, Sosa was ejected.

"I said, 'That was a strike,'" Sosa said, "and then the second-base umpire was like, 'Knock it off.' I said something back to him, and that was everything. I was all the way in right field, but I guess he took it the wrong way and threw me out of the game."

Sosa's ejection was not the only outrageous occurrence Saturday.

At Surprise, Ariz., Kansas City's Calvin Pickering hit a grand slam in the sixth inning but was called out when he passed baserunner Justin Huber at first base. Pickering was credited with a three-run, 385-foot solo to left.

"That was the batter's fault," Royals manager Tony Pena said.

"We want our runners to tag up in that situation and we want the batter to be watching the runner. It's good these things happen down here."

In other games:

Twins (5) 12, Red Sox (3) 7: At Fort Myers, Fla., David Ortiz hit a grand slam for Boston against his former team. Brad Radke, making his first spring start for Minnesota, gave up one unearned run in two innings and revealed that he was close to joining the World Series champion Red Sox over the winter.

Twins (6) 6, Pirates 2: At Bradenton, Fla., Scott Baker, one of Minnesota's top pitching prospects, retired all six batters he faced. Jacques Jones went 2-for-5



Seattle Mariners third baseman Adrian Beltre throws to first on a grounder by San Diego Padres' Ryan Klesko during the second inning Saturday in Peoria, Ariz. Klesko was out on the play. The Padres won 5-2.

with an RBI. Pirates starter Josh Fogg pitched three scoreless innings.

Devil Rays 8, Blue Jays 4: At Dunedin, Fla., Denny Neagle pitched two scoreless innings for Tampa Bay in his first outing in nearly 19 months. He allowed two hits and struck out one. He threw 26 pitches — 19 strikes.

Braves 4, Astros 3 (10): At Kissimmee, Fla., Horacio Ramirez, coming off a shoulder injury, pitched a hitless and pain-free inning in his spring debut for Atlanta. Houston's Roy Oswalt, the only 20-game winner in the NL last year, also made a strong start with two perfect innings on 22 pitches.

Indians 5, Phillies 3: At Clearwater, Fla., prized prospect Gavin Floyd worked three scoreless innings for Philadelphia, but Jose Morban and John Rodriguez each hit a two-run homer in the eighth to rally Cleveland.

Padres (5) 5, Mariners 2: At Peoria, Ariz., Ramon Hernandez hit a two-run double and Brian Lawrence pitched two scoreless innings for San Diego. Seattle starter Jamie Moyer threw two shutout innings.

Giants (5) 5, Padres (5) 4 (10): At Scottsdale, Ariz., Jason Schmidt was pleasantly surprised by his strong outing, throwing three scoreless innings on a windy day.

Darrell May, trying to become San Diego's fifth starter, held the Giants scoreless for two innings.

Cubs 8, Giants (5) 2: At Mesa, Ariz., San Francisco's Moises Alou went hitless in two at-bats against his former team. Giants starter Jerome Williams gave up six hits and five runs in the first inning. Ryan Dempster pitched two perfect innings, striking out three.

Rockies 7, Angels 6: At Tempe, Ariz., Jason Jennings

pitched two hitless innings in his first start of the spring for Colorado. Juan Rivera hit his first homer, and fellow Angels newcomer Orlando Cabrera had a three-run double.

Rangers 5, Royals 3: At Surprise, Ariz., Kansas City's Kevin Appier was hit in his pitching shoulder by Michael Young's line drive, cutting short his first outing in almost a year.

W's Sox 10, Diamondbacks 0: At Tucson, Ariz., Carl Everett hit a grand slam and Chicago had five extra-base hits. Diamondbacks reliever Jose Valverde was roughed up for five runs. Arizona left-hander Shawn Estes tossed two innings and allowed one earned run.

Red Sox (5) 8, Reds 7: At Sarasota, Fla., Eric Milton allowed three runs in two innings in his first start for Cincinnati. Ramon Vazquez hit a two-run homer and Trent Lott added an RBI double in the first for Boston.

Selig: Positive steroid tests dropped dramatically last season

By BOB BAUM

The Associated Press

MESA, Ariz. — The number of positive tests for steroids in Major League Baseball dropped to between 1 to 2 percent last season, Commissioner Bud Selig said Saturday, and he predicted the virtual elimination of the drug from the sport this year.

The new figures, based on just under 1,200 tests, compare with 5 to 7 percent positive results in 2003, the first season that major league players were tested.

Selig said the test results "started me and a lot of other people." "I am very confident that we

will effectively rid our sport of steroids in this coming season," he said at a news conference.

The tests in 2003-04 were done on the 2002 collective bargaining agreement adhering to a program far less stringent than the one adopted by Major League Baseball and the players' union this year. The new program implemented this week includes an unannounced test of every player, along with random testing and tests in the offseason.

"I'm comfortable in telling you that we've not only dealt with our problem, but we will finish what we started," Selig said.

"There always will be some exceptions, but I'm very comfortable with what we've done."

Selig also said the minor league testing program has dropped from 11 percent of tests being positive in 2001 to 1.7 percent last season.

The commissioner emphatically refuted the notion that baseball owners looked the other way from the steroid problem because they loved the popularity of the home-run binge of the late 1990s. He said he had never heard an owner, manager, player or anyone else involved in the sport voice that feeling.

"Do I wish that I knew in 1995

or 1996 what I know today about this after all the hours I've spent?" Selig said. "Of course I do. I would be less than honest if I didn't say that. We're just learning a lot of things now. But we've hired the best people we have, we've gone to Olympic labs. And I think our programs are as consistently good as anybody else."

"But the facts speak for themselves."

A House committee plans hearings on the use of steroids in baseball, and Selig has been invited to testify, along with several former and current players. Selig would not say whether he would accept the invitation.

If current players are subpoenaed to testify, Selig said, "the only thing I'm going to say is I'm very protective of players and we'll just have to work our way through all of that."

Rob Manfred, executive vice president for labor relations in the commissioner's office and baseball's point man in the steroid program, said that last year's testing program was as unpredictable as possible, given its limitations.

"Some testing was done at home, some testing was done on the road. Players were randomly selected for testing. We did not do entire rosters at one time," he said.

Schechter out front to begin IRL season

The Associated Press

HOMESTEAD, Fla. — Tomas Schechter put Panther Racing out front Saturday with Chevrolet power, easily winning the pole for the season-opening Toyota Indy 300 at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

The son of former Formula One champion Jody Scheckter got around the 1½-mile oval at 214.15 mph in a Dallara, nearly a full mile per hour faster than the 214.317 by runner-up Vitor Meira's Honda-powered Panoz.

GMRacing has struggled in the IRL since Honda and Toyota brought their engines to the IndyCar Series in 2003 and will pull its Chevrolet Indy V-8s out of the series after 2005. Meanwhile, the company is focusing its IndyCar efforts on Panther, fielding cars for Schechter and Tomas Engle.

Engle, in his first season with Panther, was a solid third at 214.152 Saturday with the other Chevy-Dallara.

More Honda-powered cars followed. Buddy Rice, last year's Indianapolis 500 winner, was fourth at 214.006, with Dario Franchitti next at 209.99 and Scott Sharp sixth at 213.463.

Helio Castroneves was seventh at 213.313 in the fastest Toyota-powered car, with Penske teammate Tony Hornish close behind at 212.887.

A Chevrolet-powered car has not been in the IRL since Tony Stewart's 2001 season. The San Jose Hornish Jr. took the checked flag at California Speedway two races from the end of the 2003 season.

Danica Patrick, a 22-year-old rookie and the only woman racing in the IndyCar Series this season, joined Team Rahal teammates Rice and Meira in the top half of the 22-car field. Her 212.871 was good enough for ninth place on the grid.



Italy's Giancarlo Fisichella raises his arms as he celebrates his victory in the Australian Grand Prix at Melbourne's Albert Park circuit Sunday. Rubens Barrichello finished second and Fernando Alonso third.

Fisichella wins F1 opener

Crash takes M. Schumacher out of race

BY JOHN PYE

The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Italy's Giancarlo Fisichella won Formula One's season-opening Australian Grand Prix on Sunday. Fisichella finished 57 laps on the 3.295-mile Albert Park circuit in 1 hour, 24 minutes, 17.336 seconds in his Renault.

Ferrari's Rubens Barrichello was second, 5.55 seconds back, and Fisichella's Renault teammate, Fernando Alonso, finished third.

Michael Schumacher, who won 13 races last year en route to his seventh world championship, retired with 15 laps remaining after a collision with Nick Heidfeld. The Ferrari driver started on the back row of the grid.

The 32-year-old Fisichella's only previous F1 victory in 141 races was at the controversial 2003 Brazilian GP, when he wasn't awarded the victory for five days until it was discovered he was ahead when the race was stopped.

"It's my first time to celebrate the victory on the podium," Fisichella said. "It's been fantastic, a great experience — I want to do it again."

With new rules restricting drivers to one engine for two races and one tire setup per race, Fisichella's smooth driving made the difference.

Avoiding heavy rain that drenched the circuit just after he'd finished his first qualifying lap Saturday afternoon also helped him.

He returned for the second qualifying session Sunday and easily maintained his lead, giving him pole position in an all-Italian front row with Toyota's Jarno Trulli.

Trulli finished ninth. Schumacher moved as high as seventh after starting 19th with a new engine. His Australian title defense ended when he and Nick Heidfeld touched wheels and then collided at in the third turn on the 43rd lap.

Australian Grand Prix

Sunday At Albert Park Circuit Melbourne, Australia Lap length: 3.28 miles	
1. Giancarlo Fisichella, Italy, Renault,	57 laps, 1 hour, 24 minutes, 17.336 seconds, 133.609 mph.
2. Rubens Barrichello, Brazil, Ferrari,	57, 1:24:22.880.
3. Fernando Alonso, Spain, Renault,	57, 1:24:24.046.
4. David Coulthard, Britain, Red Bull,	57, 1:24:33.467.
5. Mark Webber, Australia, Williams,	57, 1:24:42.344.
6. Juan Pablo Montoya, Colombia,	McLaren, 57, 1:24:52.369.
7. Christian Klien, Austria, Red Bull,	57, 1:24:56.333.
8. Kimi Raikkonen, Finland, McLaren,	57, 1:25:00.444.
9. Jarno Trulli, Italy, Toyota,	57, 1:25:20.444.
10. Felipe Massa, Brazil, Sauber,	57, 1:25:21.778.
11. Jenson Button, Britain, BAR-Honda,	56, 1:26:33.333.
12. Ralf Schumacher, Germany, Toyota,	56, 1:26:56.888.
13. Jacques Villeneuve, Canada, Sauber,	56, 1:27:00.444.
14. Takuma Sato, Japan, BAR-Honda,	56, 1:27:00.444.
15. Narain Karthikeyan, India, Jordan,	55, 1:27:00.444.
16. Tiago Monteiro, Portugal, Jordan,	55, 1:27:00.444.
17. Patrick Friesacher, Austria, Minardi,	53.
Michael Schumacher, Germany, Ferrari,	Not classified.
Nick Heidfeld, Germany, Williams,	Not classified.
Christian Albers, Netherlands, Minardi,	Not classified.

Mexican Goeters secures Busch pole

The Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Some NASCAR fans worried about security as they made their way south of the border. They had reason for concern: Somebody stole the pole.

Mexico's Jorge Goeters thrilled hometown fans Saturday by topping qualifying for Sunday's Telcel-Motorola 200, edging Nextel Cup veteran Robby Gordon.

"It was really cool to see that guy get the pole, to see all the fans going crazy with the air horns going," said defending series champ Martin Truex Jr., "who was third-fastest. 'I don't think they'd have done that for me.'"

It also was good news for NASCAR, adding to local interest in a race that it hopes will help build an enduring relationship with fans in Mexico and with Hispanic fans in the United States.

"As far as Busch qualifying, I don't think we've ever had this many people at the track," Truex said, though officials did not have a count of the crowd Saturday.

Goeters called it "the happiest day of my life" after his No. 66 Ford bumped Gordon to second on the 2.518-mile race course.

"I can't tell you what this event means for me and for my country. I've always dreams of running in NASCAR," Goeters said.

"I didn't even know it was a good lap until my team told me. 'You did it. You're the leader!'"

It got even happier later. Goeters returned on the pole in the afternoon's Corona Challenge race and finished second to brother Patrick.

The 34-year-old Goeters has won Mexican titles in trucks (2002), Mustangs (1997), sport prototypes and tractor trucks (both in 1996).

Austrain Maier wins super-G, 50th World Cup race of career

The Associated Press

KVITFJELL, Norway — Hermann Maier won a super-giant slalom on Lillehammer's Olympic course Sunday for his 50th World Cup win, tying Alberto Tomba for second place on the career list.

Austria's Benjamin Raich finished fourth, just ahead of Bode Miller, and drew closer to the American in their race for the overall title. Miller, trying to become the first American since Phil Mahre in 1983 to win the men's overall, leads Raich by 52 points (1,348 points to 1,296) with only four races left.

Maier, who also won Saturday's downhill on the same slope, was timed in 1 minute, 32.98 seconds. He beat Didier Defago of Switzerland by 0.83 seconds while Darren Rawlins of the United States was third, 0.86 back.

Maier, the four-time and defending World Cup overall cham-

Sports briefs

pion, joined Italy's Tomba in second place on the career victory list behind Ingemar Stenmark. The Swedish great leads with 86, all in slalom and giant slalom.

"There are still chances to win some more," the 32-year-old Maier said. "I'm still younger than Tomba when he reached 50."

This season, one race remains in each discipline — the downhill, super-G, slalom and giant slalom at the World Cup finals in Lenzerheide, Switzerland, starting Thursday. A victory is worth 10 points.

Castillo, Lacy successfully defend titles

LAS VEGAS — Jose Luis Castillo won over Julio Diaz with re-

lentless pressure Saturday night before finally stopping him in the 10th round to retain the WBC lightweight title.

Castillo fought true to his usual form, patiently stalking Diaz throughout the fight before knocking him down twice in the 10th.

Diaz was on one knee after the second knockdown when referee Richard Steele counted to nine, then waved the fight to a close.

It was the second defense for Castillo of the title he won from Juan Lizardo last year.

In another title fight on the card at the Mandalay Bay hotel-casino, former Olympian Jeff Lacy retained his IBF super-middleweight title by stopping Brian Williams in the seventh round.

Castillo, winning for the 52nd time in his pro career, opened rounds over both of Diaz's eyes with apparent head butts, and Diaz's left eye was nearly swollen shut when the fight ended.

Diaz (30-3) gave up his IBF lightweight title to challenge Castillo, but simply did not have enough power to keep him off of him.

Castillo (52-61 with 46 knockouts) was ahead 88-83 on all three scorecards after the ninth round, but many sure that the judges wouldn't have a say in the fight when he put the challenger away in the 10th round.

Buser goes for record-tying fifth Iditarod title

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Fearless, foolhardy or just plain stubborn, four-time champion Martin Buser charged Saturday the 1,100-mile Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race on Saturday, a few days after the middle finger of his right hand was amputated above the second joint.

Buser, 46, who was injured in a table saw accident Tuesday, loaded up on painkillers, antibiotics

and anti-inflammatory pills. He wore bandages and a special splint on his mangled hand and stuffed it inside an oversized black mitten.

At the festive, ceremonial start of the 33rd Iditarod, he happily signed autographs, held his left-hand sled and posed for photographs with fans on a crisp, sunny morning before setting off on a journey to Nome that is perilous even for mushers in the best of health.

The first day was easy, starting out on trucked-in snow downed by a steady rain. He's 11 miles with reducing teams of 12 dogs headed "Iditariders," who paid for the thrill. The race really gets going Sunday with a rest area from Willow, 70 miles north of the city. From there it's a danger-filled trail through steep gorges, along frozen rivers and over treacherous mountain passes in sub-zero temperatures with howling winds.

Davis Cup doubles loss leaves U.S. only a singles chance

By Ken Peters
The Associated Press

CARSON, Calif. — In jeopardy of being eliminated by Croatia in the opening round of the Davis Cup for the second time in three years, the Americans turned to Andy Roddick and Andre Agassi.

Twins Mike and Bob Bryan lost a doubles match for the first time in Davis Cup play Saturday, and Croatia took the lead against the heavily favored United States.

Ivan Ljubicic and Mario Ancic beat the Bryans 3-6, 7-6 (8), 6-4, 6-4 for Croatia's second win in three matches in the best-of-five competition.

Roddick will play Ljubicic in Sunday's first match, and Agassi will face Ancic in the fifth and final match — if the Croatians haven't clinched by then.

U.S. captain Patrick McEnroe is glad he's able to send out Roddick and Agassi, who are playing Davis Cup for the first time in five years.

"If there are two guys you want to roll out down 2-1, we've got the two guys we want," McEnroe said. "So I'm extremely confident that they're both going to play well."

"Andre's been in this position before, and Andy's been in a position where he's had to win a match. This is our best team, our best one-two punch."

The Bryans were 5-0 and hadn't lost a set in Davis Cup going in against Ljubicic and Ancic, bronze medalists in the 2004 Olympics and playing Davis Cup doubles together for just the second time.

"It hurts. It doesn't feel good to let your team down," Mike Bryan said. "It was a long, hard day. At least we kept them out there for two hours and 40 minutes."

The Americans hope that playing both singles and doubles has taken a toll on Ljubicic, 25, and Ancic, 20. Ljubicic defeated Agassi in straight sets Friday, and Roddick downed Ancic 4-6, 6-2, 6-1, 6-4.



Croatia's Ivan Ljubicic, right, high fives his doubles teammate Mario Ancic after they defeated United States' Bob and Mike Bryan, 3-6, 7-6 (10-8), 6-4, 6-4, during Saturday's first-round Davis Cup match.

Croatia ousted the United States in the opening round of the 2003 Cup play, the only previous meeting between the two countries.

Ljubicic won both his singles matches and teamed for a doubles victory in that competition in Zagreb.

"To win five in a row is amazing," Ljubicic said of his perfect Davis Cup mark against America. "But it's still a long way. We need to win three sets, one of us, and it's not easy."

It's still Roddick and Agassi on the other side of the net, so we need to be careful."

McEnroe said there's more pressure on Croatia, "pressure on them to close this out."

Croatia captain Nikola Pilic didn't agree.

"I would say that they have to win two matches and we only have to win one," he said.

The Americans, 5-32 in previous rounds when trailing 2-1, haven't won the Davis Cup since

1995. That's the longest drought in 68 years for the United States, beaten by Spain in last year's finals.

Ljubicic, a singles finalist in four tour events already this year, made the difference in the doubles victory. Along with his booming serves, often in the high 130-mph range, he slashed shots down the lines and showed a deft touch at the net.

After winning the first set, the Bryans seemed to be back on their heels much of the rest of the match against the two talented singles players.

Ljubicic served 13 aces — including three in a row for a 5-3 lead in the fourth set — and Ancic had eight. The Bryans combined had eight.

Agassi, who turns 35 next month, decided to return to try to help the Americans end their winless spell and capture their 32nd Davis Cup.

Ljubicic, 6-3, 7-6 (10), 6-3 win over him was only Agassi's sixth loss in 36 Davis Cup matches.

lier this week.

Luke McCown and Josh Harris were the only two quarterbacks on the Cleveland roster before the trade.

Falcons re-sign returner Rossum

ATLANTA — The Atlanta Falcons re-signed Pro Bowl return specialist Alen Rossum on Saturday and added kicker Todd Peterson.

Rossum, who set an NFL playoff record last season with 153 yards on three punt returns against St. Louis, agreed to a four-year contract. The 5-foot-8, 178-pound seven-year veteran had 21 tackles, two interceptions and a sack while playing defensive back.

Peterson agreed to a one-year deal. He kicked for San Francisco last season.

Charge by Woods sets Doral duel

The Associated Press

MIAMI — Phil Mickelson heard the roars of a dynamic charge ahead of him. Every time he glanced at the leaderboard, he noticed Tiger Woods taking another shot off his lead into the wind down to two Saturday in the Ford Championship at Doral.

Lefty was loving it. "I had a different feeling today," Mickelson said after his 6-under 66. "I wanted him to play well. I

want to go head-to-head with him. I've been looking forward to the chance to play head-to-head against him. If I'm able to turn things around from the past and come out on top, it will make for a very special week."

Doral could not have asked for a better duel. Mickelson continued to bully the Blue Monster with a variety of wedge shots from thick rough that gave him birdie chances, and left him at 20-under 116 and in the lead for the 10th consecutive round in stroke play.

Woods energized the monstrous gallery with his power, driving the green on the 347-yard 16th hole and making good on a birthday pledge to his father to shoot a low round. His 8-put birdie on the final hole gave him a 9-under 63, the low score of the tournament, and put him two shots behind.

"We're going to have a bunch of fun tomorrow," Woods said. "It's going to be competitive, and I think we're both going to be focused on making a bunch of birdies."

The gallery might not realize this, but there were other players with an outside chance at Doral. Zach Johnson, who had to pull out of the pro-am with a bad back, shot a 64 and was six shots behind at 14 under, along with James Draycott (67) and defending champion Craig Parry (67).

Visaj Singh couldn't keep pace with a 68 and was seven shots behind, joined by two-time Masters champion Jose Maria Olazabal (70) and former U.S. Open champion Jim Furyk (67).

But all that mattered to anyone were two of the biggest names in golf — Phil and Tiger. They last played in the final group at the 2003 Buick Invitational, after Lefty had made his infamous "inferior" equipment comment. Woods went on to win by four, with Mickelson six shots behind.

Mickelson repeatedly said his record was not so stellar against Woods, although he usually is having to make up ground. He is one of three players on the PGA Tour to beat him from behind, at the 2000 Tour Championship.

While it looks like a two-man race on Sunday, Mickelson cautioned not to forget about the rest of the field. "We want to make sure that we don't let them back in the tournament," he said.



Tiger Woods watches as his ball rolls into the hole on the 18th green on Saturday at Doral, ending his charge that moved him within two shots of the lead.

Eagle gives Els Dubai title

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Ernie Els eagled the final hole Sunday to win the Dubai Desert Classic for the third time with a one-stroke victory over Miguel Angel Jimenez, who had led for most of the tournament.

Els, who shot a 4-under-par 68 and finished at 19-under 269, captured his first title of 2005. He also won in Dubai in 1994 and 2002.

Jimenez, a five-time winner on the European tour in 2004, reached the green in two on the par-5 18th but settled for par. The Spaniard missed a birdie putt from 10 feet and shared second place with Stephen Dodd of Wales, who finished with a 66 for a 270.

Colin Montgomerie of Scotland shot a 69 and followed at 272.

Kerr leads MasterCard by two

HUQUILUCAN, Mexico — Cristie Kerr shot a 4-under 68 to take a two-stroke lead over Moira Dunn and South Korea's Sae-Hee Son into the final round of the MasterCard Classic, the first LPGA Tour event in Mexico since 1975.

Annika Sorenstam, playing her first event of the year, was three strokes behind after a 71, while Mexico's Lorena Ochoa shot a 75 to fall eight back at 2 over.

Kerr, second to Jennifer Rosales last week in the SBS Open in Hawaii, had six birdies — four on the back nine — and two bogeys to reach 6 under on the Bosque Real Country Club course. Dunn shot a 72, and Son had her second straight 70.

Sorenstam, an eight-time winner last year on the LPGA Tour, was 3 under through 14 holes, but dropped two strokes with a double bogey on No. 15.

Browns trade for veteran QB Dilfer

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — The Cleveland Browns didn't want to find an experienced quarterback, acquiring Trent Dilfer from Seattle on Saturday for a fourth-round draft pick.

The Browns were left with two inexperienced quarterbacks after Kelly Holcomb signed a four-year deal with Buffalo on Friday. They released starter Jeff Garcia earlier this offseason.

Enter Dilfer, who became expendable in Seattle after starter Matt Hasselbeck signed a six-year, \$49 million contract last month.

Dilfer, who turns 33 on March 13, appeared in five games last season, leading the Seahawks to victory in his only two starts.

The trade, contingent on league approval and Dilfer passing a



General Manager Phil Savage.

Savage was Baltimore's player personnel director when Dilfer took over for starter Tony Banks midway through the 2000 season and led the Ravens to a Super Bowl championship.

The move still leaves Cleveland with plenty of flexibility as it searches for a long-term solution at quarterback.

Dilfer only has one year left on his contract, so his addition would not prevent the Browns from making other moves. The fourth-round pick also is an extra one, acquired from Denver for defensive tackle Gerard Warren ear-

lier this week. Luke McCown and Josh Harris were the only two quarterbacks on the Cleveland roster before the trade.

Falcons re-sign returner Rossum

ATLANTA — The Atlanta Falcons re-signed Pro Bowl return specialist Alen Rossum on Saturday and added kicker Todd Peterson.

Rossum, who set an NFL playoff record last season with 153 yards on three punt returns against St. Louis, agreed to a four-year contract. The 5-foot-8, 178-pound seven-year veteran had 21 tackles, two interceptions and a sack while playing defensive back.

Peterson agreed to a one-year deal. He kicked for San Francisco last season.



Eastern Kentucky's Zach Ingles (3) is pressured by Austin Peay's Maurice Hampton, left, and Derek Wright during the Ohio Valley Conference title game on Saturday. Eastern Kentucky won 52-46.

Colons march into CAA

Eastern Kentucky ends 26-year tournament drought; Winthrop, Central Florida, Chattanooga earn berths

The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Travis Ford has played in a handful of NCAA tournaments and even a Final Four. Yet coaching his own team to an NCAA appearance easily beats anything he accomplished on the court as a star guard at Kentucky.

"This will be something that you remember for a lifetime," said Ford, who will be making his NCAA tournament debut as a coach.

Zach Ingles scored 15 points and Eastern Kentucky earned its first NCAA tournament berth since 1979 by holding off Austin Peay 52-46 Saturday in the Ohio Valley Conference championship game.

The Colons set a school record for victories by winning their seventh straight and improving to 22-8 overall. This will be Eastern Kentucky's sixth NCAA tournament berth overall.

Ford said he told his Colons to seize an opportunity that may never come their way again in a conference in which only the tournament champion is assured an NCAA berth.

"This is my greatest sports achievement to this date. I'm so happy for these guys that they get

Conference tournaments

to experience it," Ford said. Haneey added 12 points and grabbed 13 rebounds for the second-seeded Colons. Ford joked that he had to beg the 6-foot-6 senior forward to help him rebuild a program that won only seven games during each of the Ford's first two seasons.

Haneey said he had faith that Ford would keep bringing in good players and now he will get to finish his career in the NCAA tournament, an unimaginable goal four years ago.

"It's just an unbelievable feeling," Haneey said.

The Colons led by as much as 13 points, the last at 32-19 after a three-pointer by Ingles with 15:29 left. Austin Peay (13-19) got back into it with a 16-5 run, closing to 47-46 on two free throws by Maurice Hampton with 50.6 seconds left.

Ingles answered with a long three-pointer with 21.7 seconds to play to seal the victory.

Big South
Winthrop 68, Charleston Southern 46: Craig Bradshaw had 16 points and Torrell Martin had 13 points and nine rebounds,

helping Winthrop return to the NCAA tournament after a two-year absence.

Winthrop (27-5) went to the NCAA tournament in each of coach Gregg Marshall's first four seasons before missing out in 2003 and 2004.

Atlantic Sun

Central Florida 63, Gardner-Webb 54: Gary Johnson scored 19 points to help Central Florida (24-8) clinch its second straight NCAA tournament appearance.

UCF (24-8), which is 12-1 in its last 13 games, held Gardner-Webb (18-12) without a field goal for almost 12 minutes to turn a three-point deficit into a 15-point advantage.

Southern

Chattanooga 66, UNC Greensboro 62: Charles Anderson led a balanced offense with 13 points and Mindugas Katelynas added 12 to help Chattanooga (20-10) win its first Southern Conference title since 1997 in its first season under coach Jeff Shulman.

Greensboro (18-12) used an 8-0 run to cut Chattanooga's lead to two with 1:27 left, but the Mocs made five of eight free throws during the stretch.

Men's conference tournament scoreboard

America East

Friday, March 4
Md.-Baltimore Co. 78, New Hampshire 73
Stony Brook 66, Hartford 64

Saturday, March 5
Binghamton 67, Albany 62
Vermont 76, Md.-Baltimore Co. 61
Northeastern 90, Stony Brook 79

Sunday, March 6
Maine 47, Boston University 45
Binghamton vs. Vermont
Northeastern vs. Quinnipiac

Saturday, March 12
Championship

Atlantic Sun

Friday, March 4
Gardner-Webb 64, Troy 62
Jacksonville 81, Mercer 68
Belmont 67, Georgia State 61

Friday, March 4
Jacksonville 81, Lipscomb 64
Gardner-Webb 77, Jacksonville 76
Central Florida 66, Belmont 51

Saturday, March 5
Championship
Central Florida 63, Gardner-Webb 54

Atlantic 10

Wednesday, March 9
Richmond vs. Rhode Island
Massachusetts vs. La Salle
Fordham vs. Duquesne

Thursday, March 10
Dayton vs. Bonaventure
Saint Joseph's vs. Richmond/Rhode Island
Xavier vs. Massachusetts/La Salle

Friday, March 11
Georgetown vs. Fordham/Duquesne
Female vs. Dayton St. Bonaventure

Friday, March 11
Semifinals
Championship

Big East

Wednesday, March 9
West Virginia vs. Providence
Georgetown vs. Seton Hall
Northeastern vs. Rutgers

Thursday, March 10
Boston College vs. Virginia/Providence
Villanova vs. Pittsburgh
Connecticut vs. Georgetown/Seton Hall
Syracuse vs. Notre Dame/Buena Vista

Friday, March 11
Semifinals
Championship

Big Sky

Saturday, March 5
Montana 58, Eastern Washington 48
Weber State 74, Sacramento State 70

Tuesday, March 8
Montana State vs. Weber State
Portland State vs. Weber State
Championship

Big South

Tuesday, March 1
Charleston Southern 65, Liberty 60
High Point 82, Asheville 59
Winthrop 74, Coastal Carolina 62

Thursday, March 3
Charleston Southern 58, High Point 55
Winthrop 78, Birmingham-Southern 64

Saturday, March 5
Championship
Winthrop 68, Charleston Southern 46

Colonial Athletic

Friday, March 4
William & Mary 68, James Madison 54
Delaware 76, Towson 56

Saturday, March 5
Old Dominion 64, William & Mary 51
Hofstra 88, Drexel 77

Sunday, March 6
Va. Commonwealth 74, Delaware 61
N.C.-Wilmington 60, George Mason 47

Sunday, March 6
Old Dominion vs. Hofstra
Va. Commonwealth vs. N.C.-Wilmington

Monday, March 7
Championship

Conference USA

Wednesday, March 9
Texas Christian vs. Marquette
DePaul vs. Tulane
Memphis vs. Saint Louis

Thursday, March 10
Louisville vs. TCU/Marquette
Alabama-Birmingham vs. Norfolk/Tulane
Charlotte vs. Memphis/Saint Louis

Friday, March 11
Cincinnati vs. Houston
Semifinals
Championship

Horizon League

Tuesday, March 1
Wright State 61, Butler 57
Louisville 74, Youngstown State 75

Friday, March 4
Illinois-Chicago 54, Cleveland State 51
Detroit 61, Wright State 48

Saturday, March 5
Detroit 61, Wright State 48
Louisville 74, Youngstown State 75

Sunday, March 6
Championship
Detroit vs. Wisconsin-River Falls
Wis.-Milwaukee 54, Loyola of Chicago 76

Sunday, March 6
Championship
Detroit vs. Wis.-Milwaukee

Metro Atlantic

Friday, March 4
Iona 68, Siena 57
Canisius 62, Marist 60

Saturday, March 5
Rider 97, St. Peter's 74
Rider 75, Canisius 59

Mountain West

Friday, March 4
Fairfield 62, Manhattan 60
Niagara vs. Valparaiso
Rider vs. Fairfield

Thursday, March 3
Championship
Manhattan 60, Fairfield 57

Mid-American

Monday, March 7
Marshall at Ohio
Central Michigan at Kent State

Thursday, March 10
Toledo vs. Northern Illinois/Buffalo
Western Michigan vs. E. Michigan/Akron

Friday, March 11
Miami (Ohio) vs. Ball State/Rolling Green
Ohio-Marshall vs. Kent State/C. Michigan

Saturday, March 12
Semifinals
Championship

Mid-Continent

Saturday, March 5
Oral Roberts 82, Southern Utah 59
Southeastern 87, Mo.-Kansas City 63

Sunday, March 6
IUPUI-Indianaapolis vs. W. Illinois
Valparaiso vs. Chicago State

Monday, March 7
Oral Roberts vs. IUPUI/W. Illinois
Oakland, Mich. vs. Valparaiso/Chicago St.

Tuesday, March 8
Championship

Mid-Eastern Athletic

Monday, March 7
Morgan State vs. Md.-Eastern Shore
Florida A&M vs. Howard

Tuesday, March 8
Bethune-Cookman vs. N.C. A&T
Delaware State vs. middle-seeded winner

Thursday, March 10
Southern State vs. Norfolk State
Coppin State vs. highest-seeded winner

Friday, March 11
Semifinals
Saturday, March 12
Championship

Missouri Valley

Friday, March 4
Indiana State 61, Bradley 51
Drake 82, Evansville 68

Saturday, March 5
Southern Illinois 64, Southern Iowa 62
Whitalla State 72, Drake 52

Sunday, March 6
Creighton vs. Southern Illinois State
Whitalla State vs. Creighton

Monday, March 7
Championship

Mountain West

Friday, March 4
Utah vs. Colorado State
Wyoming vs. New Mexico

Friday, March 4
Utah/Colorado State vs. New Mexico
New Mexico BVI vs. Air Force/St. Diego State

Friday, March 4
Championship

Northeast

Thursday, March 3
Monmouth, N.J. 54, Connecticut 53
Fairleigh Dickinson 78, St. Francis, N.Y. 60

Friday, March 4
Long Island U. 76, St. Francis, Pa. 67
St. Francis, Pa. 67 vs. Marist State 58

Friday, March 4
Wagner at Monmouth, N.J.
LIU at Fairfield

Wednesday, March 9
Championship

Ohio Valley

Tuesday, March 1
Tennessee Tech 72, Eastern Illinois 68
Western Kentucky 69, Middle Tennessee 68

Friday, March 4
Austin Peay 67, Tennessee 61
Eastern Kentucky 69, St. Missouri 57

Saturday, March 5
Championship
Eastern Kentucky 51, Austin Peay 46

Patriot

Friday, March 4
Lehigh 77, Colgate 60
Holy Cross 79, Army 42

Saturday, March 5
Navy 85, UT
Cleveland 70, Lafayette 34

Sunday, March 6
Lehigh at Holy Cross
American at Bucknell

Friday, March 11
Championship

Southeastern

Thursday, March 10
South Carolina vs. Mississippi
Mississippi State vs. Georgia

Friday, March 11
Arkansas vs. Tennessee
Vanderbilt vs. Auburn

Saturday, March 12
Semifinals
Championship

Southern

Wednesday, March 2
Elon 64, Wake Forest 57
Georgia Southern 68, Georgia Southern 57

Thursday, March 3
East Tennessee State 87, Furman 84
Appalachian State 68, The Citadel 59

Friday, March 4
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Stanford's Matt Haryasz (52) scores over Washington's Nate Robinson during the second half of Saturday's game, which Stanford won 77-67.

BY JANIE MCCAULEY
The Associated Press

STANFORD, Calif. — Matt Haryasz had a career-high 24 points and 10 rebounds and inspired Stanford shocked No. 10 Washington 77-67 on Saturday, dashing the Huskies' bid for at least a share of their first Pac-10 title in two decades.

"We blew our chance. That was it," said guard Nate Robinson, frustrated with his 4-of-16, 11-point performance. "I'm just speechless right now. I don't know what to say. We couldn't get it done."

Arizona's last-second, 70-68 victory over Arizona State gave the Wildcats the title outright, one game ahead of the Huskies (24-5, 14-4 Pac-10), who haven't won a league title since tying USC in 1985.

Strangely enough, it was Washington that kept Stanford from an undefeated regular-season last year by ending the Cardinal's 26-game winning streak with a 77-66 victory in Seattle during the final Pac-10 weekend.

"That hurt," Haryasz recalled of last season's meeting.

Brandon Roy had 16 points and eight rebounds, but the cold-shotting Huskies never found a rhythm only two days after making a school-record 16 three-pointers in a 106-73 victory at California.

Washington has lost 12 straight games at Maples Pavilion, where a foulout crowd of 7,233 made things hard for the Huskies all day.

Hundreds of students dressed in red ran onto the floor to celebrate when the final buzzer sounded.

The Huskies had won four straight and eight of nine, and their frustration was evident when Roy hammered Fred Washington under the basket with 26.6 seconds left for an intentional foul.

"If you're standing around like we were, it's hard to get ball movement," Washington coach Lorenzo Romar said. "That was maybe the biggest culprit."

Stanford (17-11, 11-7) took a major step forward after an embarrassing 59-48 loss to Washington State on Thursday. The Cardinal, who have reached the NCAA tournament's second round each of the past 10 seasons, did a lot to boost their postseason chances.

"We were embarrassed two nights ago, and we didn't want any part of that feeling again," Stanford coach Trent Johnson said.

Haryasz practically did it all on the day Stanford held a pregame ceremony to honor seniors Rob Little and Nick Robinson, who played crucial roles in last year's 30-2 season.

In the first half, the 6-foot-11 Haryasz dribbled the ball up-court against Washington's full-court press, then swished a baseline jumper moments later.

"I was really inspired," Haryasz said. "I was pretty pumped about the Washington State game."

Connecticut routs Syracuse in Big East showdown

The Associated Press

STORRS, Conn. — Denham Brown scored 21 points and No. 15 Connecticut beat No. 13 Syracuse 88-70 on Saturday to earn a share of the Big East regular season championship, the Huskies' record ninth conference title.

Connecticut (21-6, 13-3) ended up sharing the title with Boston College after the No. 5 Eagles beat Rutgers 78-66 on Saturday night. With the victory, Boston College secured the No. 1 seed in next week's Big East tournament.

The Huskies used some impressive second-half defense to beat the Orange (24-6, 11-5) and win for the ninth time in 10 games. The only loss in that stretch was a nonconference game against North Carolina.

Hakim Warrick had 25 points for Syracuse, the third seed in the Big East tournament, but he was 0-for-6 from the field in the second half, scoring all his points on a 10-for-16 effort from the free throw line.

Gerry McNamara added 12 points for the Orange, but he was 2-for-10 from 3-point range and Syracuse finished 2-for-22 from beyond the arc.

No. 5 Boston College 78, Rutgers 66: Boston College clinched the Big East regular-season title and earned the No. 1 seed in next week's tournament behind a

Men's Top 25 Roundup

21-point, 11-rebound performance by Jared Dudley.

Boston College (24-3, 13-3) finished tied with Connecticut for the best record, but it won the tie-breaker, having beaten the Huskies 75-70 in January.

Texas 74, No. 8 Oklahoma State 73: Brad Buckman tied a career high with 27 points, and Texas put an impressive victory on its NCAA tournament resume.

The loss ended the Oklahoma State's homecourt winning streak — the longest in the nation — at 29 games. Kenny Taylor added 11 for Texas (20-9, 9-7 Big 12).

Joey Graham scored 17 to lead Oklahoma State (20-6, 11-5), and James On Curry added 16.

No. 9 Louisville 66, DePaul 62: The Cardinals clinched the Conference USA title behind Larry O'Bannon's 24 points.

Louisville (26-4, 14-2), which had already clinched the top seed in the conference tournament, won for the 15th time in 16 games and finished 9-1 on the road.

No. 14 Michigan State 90, Penn State 64: Alan Anderson scored 22 points and Chris Hill added 21 for the Spartans.

Kevin Torbert and Maurice

Ager each added 11 points for Michigan State (22-5, 13-3 Big Ten).

Ben Luber and Mike Walker each scored 12 for Penn State (22-2, 15-5).

No. 16 Utah 72, San Diego State 60: Andrew Bogut recorded his 20th double-double of the season with 20 points and 15 rebounds in what was likely his final college home game. Although he's just a sophomore, Utah honored the 7-foot Australian before the season finale, a tradition usually reserved for seniors.

Bogut opened the game for the Utes (25-4, 13-1 Mountain West) with a two-handed dunk and all but ended it late in the second half with a 3-pointer to help Utah complete a 16-0 season at home.

No. 17 Pacific 64, UC Riverside 48: Guillaume Yango had 12 points and 14 rebounds to help Pacific complete a perfect season in the Big West Conference.

Mike Webb added 10 points for Pacific (25-2, 18-0), which tied a school record by winning its 21st straight game.

South Florida 85, No. 18 Charlotte 73: Terrence Leather scored 24 points and Brian Swift added 19 to lead South Florida in one of the biggest wins in school history.

The loss was the second straight for Charlotte (21-6, 12-3),

which performed much of the night like a team that had little to play for after Louisville clinched the Conference USA regular-season title by beating DePaul earlier in the day.

No. 19 Villanova 70, St. John's 68: Allan Ray scored 22 points and Villanova jumped out to a big lead early in the second half before holding off stubborn St. John's.

Will Sheridan added 19 points and 12 rebounds for the Wildcats (21-13, 5 Big East), who have won seven straight and appear headed for their first NCAA tournament berth since 1999.

No. 20 Oklahoma 74, Texas Tech 54: Kevin Bookout scored 20 points to lead Oklahoma, which handed Bob Knight his worst home loss at Texas Tech.

Oklahoma (23-6, 12-4 Big 12) came out hot in the second half, scoring on five of its first six possessions to put together a 12-0 run and go up 42-29.

No. 21 Alabama 68, Mississippi State 63: Kennedy Winston had 21 points as Alabama clinched the SEC West title.

Ronald Steele gave Alabama the lead for good when his three-pointer with 2:20 left began a 9-0 run. It helped wrap up the Ole Miss' first division crown since 2002 and an opening-round bye in next week's SEC tournament.

Jason Haas scored a career-high 18 points and Chris Hernandez and Robinson each added 12 as Stanford kept the Huskies from matching the school victory record set by the 1953 team that achieved the school's only Final Four appearance.

Washington hasn't won at Maples since a 68-67 victory Jan. 30, 1993, and hasn't swept its annual Bay Area trip since the '84-'85 season.

This Huskies team is accomplishing things the traditionally football-frenzied school hasn't done since the days Delf Schrempf and Christian Welt wore purple and gold. But now Washington will have to regroup in a hurry to prepare for next weekend's conference tournament in Los Angeles.

"We learn from our mistakes," Nate Robinson said. "And we've got to learn from this game."

"We knew we were ready and focused," he said. "We wanted to win so bad. We couldn't knock down a shot. I know I took some terrible shots."

Washington went 8 1/2 minutes over one stretch without a field goal, missing 19 straight shots.

"We got impatient for whatever reason," Romar said. "It wasn't a selfish thing."

The Huskies fell behind 9-4, but responded with an 11-1 run to go ahead as Stanford missed 11 of its first 14 shots. But Washington was held scoreless over the final 11 of the half and 19 of the second at the break after Stanford closed on a 10-0 run.

No. 22 Cincinnati 62, Memphis 60: James White hit an 8-foot baseline jumper with 16.2 seconds remaining for Cincinnati.

Armen Kirkland scored 16 points to lead the Bearcats (24-6, 12-4 Conference USA), who extended their winning streak to six games. White finished with 11 points and 11 rebounds.

No. 23 Wisconsin 64, Purdue 52: Wisconsin spoiled the last regular-season stop on Gene Keady's frustrating farewell season, ensuring the first 20-loss season for the Hoosiers in the Boilermakers' 107-year history.

Mike Wilkinson and Alando Tucker each scored 14 points — Tucker's all came in the first half — and Kamron Taylor added 11 for the Badgers (20-7, 11-5 Big Ten).

No. 24 Pittsburgh 85, Notre Dame 77: Chris Taft had a career-high 25 points and Pittsburgh (20-7, 10-6) posted its fourth straight 20-win season.

The Irish (17-9, 9-7) lost for the third time in four games.

Torin Francis had 16 points and 10 rebounds for the Irish.

No. 25 Nevada 73, San Jose State 69: Nick Fazekas had 28 points and eight rebounds, and Nevada's first division (SEC) rallied from a big early deficit for its 10th straight victory.

SPORTS



Mickelson, Woods
set for showdown
at Doral, Page 29



Arizona's Channing Frye scores over Arizona State's Serge Angoumou during the first half on Saturday in Tempe, Ariz. Arizona won 70-68 on Salim Stoudamire's last-second basket, to claim the Pac-10 title.

Stoudamire steps it up

No call on game-winner lifts Arizona to Pac-10 title

BY BOB BAUM
The Associated Press

TEMPE, Ariz. — A record 305 Pac-10 victories for Luke Olson, and another outright conference title for the Arizona Wildcats after an afternoon of high drama against their often-overshadowed in-state rivals.

Salim Stoudamire's apparent shuffle of the feet went undetected and his double-pump 14-foot jumper went in with six-tenths of a second to play to give the 11th-ranked Wildcats a 70-68 victory over Arizona State.

The Wildcats (25-5, 15-3) won their 11th conference title and ninth outright because No. 10 Washington lost at Stanford earlier in the day, and Arizona's 20th victory in its last 21 meetings with Arizona State was a thriller. "ASU? They played their hearts out," Stoudamire said. "We got up a bunch, and they fought back, showed some grit. We got up in the second half and they fought back, showed some grit, and it went down to the wire."

The Sun Devils (18-12, 7-11) rallied from 18 down in the first half to pull within one at the break, and from 15 behind in the second half to take the lead.

Stoudamire scored 22, but his game-winner was his only field goal after halftime. Replays showed he took a small extra step on the play, but there was no whistle. Kevin Kruger's desperation three-pointer at the buzzer was far short.

Embattled Arizona State coach Rob Evans wouldn't comment on the non-call. "I don't get into officiating," Evans said. "I mean, you saw the play."

In the Arizona locker room af-

terward, the players chanted "3-0-S" then doused Olson with water to celebrate his 305th Pac-10 victory, breaking the record of 304 by John Wooden.

"It means I've been here a long time, I guess," Olson said. "Whatever you accomplish with the numbers, I mean, I haven't won a game. That's the whole thing you have to remember. There have been a lot of guys who have put blood, sweat and tears into this thing happening."

Hassan Adams scored all 15 of his points in the second half for Arizona. Mustafa Shakur added 14 points. Channing Frye had 10 points and nine rebounds but was just 3-for-11 shooting.

Ike Diogu, the Pac-10 scoring and rebounding leader, scored 25 points and played the last 11½ minutes with four fouls. Steve Moore, Adams' cousin, added 16 points. Jason Braxton had nine points, seven assists and nine rebounds in his final home game for ASU.

"Nobody really thought we stood a chance against them," Diogu said, "so we just wanted to prove everybody wrong. I felt like we deserved to win this game."

Diogu's two free throws tied it at 68 with 48 seconds to play.

Adams missed for Arizona, but Stoudamire came away with the ball and Olson called a timeout with 20 seconds to left. Stoudamire took the inbound pass, dribbled down the clock, then had to double-pump against Braxton's tight defense before lofting it in.

"Oh man, I tried to force him right, and stepped back and created enough cushion to get his shot off," Braxton said. "He kind of hung up a little bit in the air so I couldn't block it. He made a great play."



Croatia puts U.S. in hole by winning doubles match for 2-1 lead in Davis Cup
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Crash keeps Schumacher from finishing F1 opener won by Fisichella
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76ers make last-second plays, hand Hawks 11th straight loss Page 26